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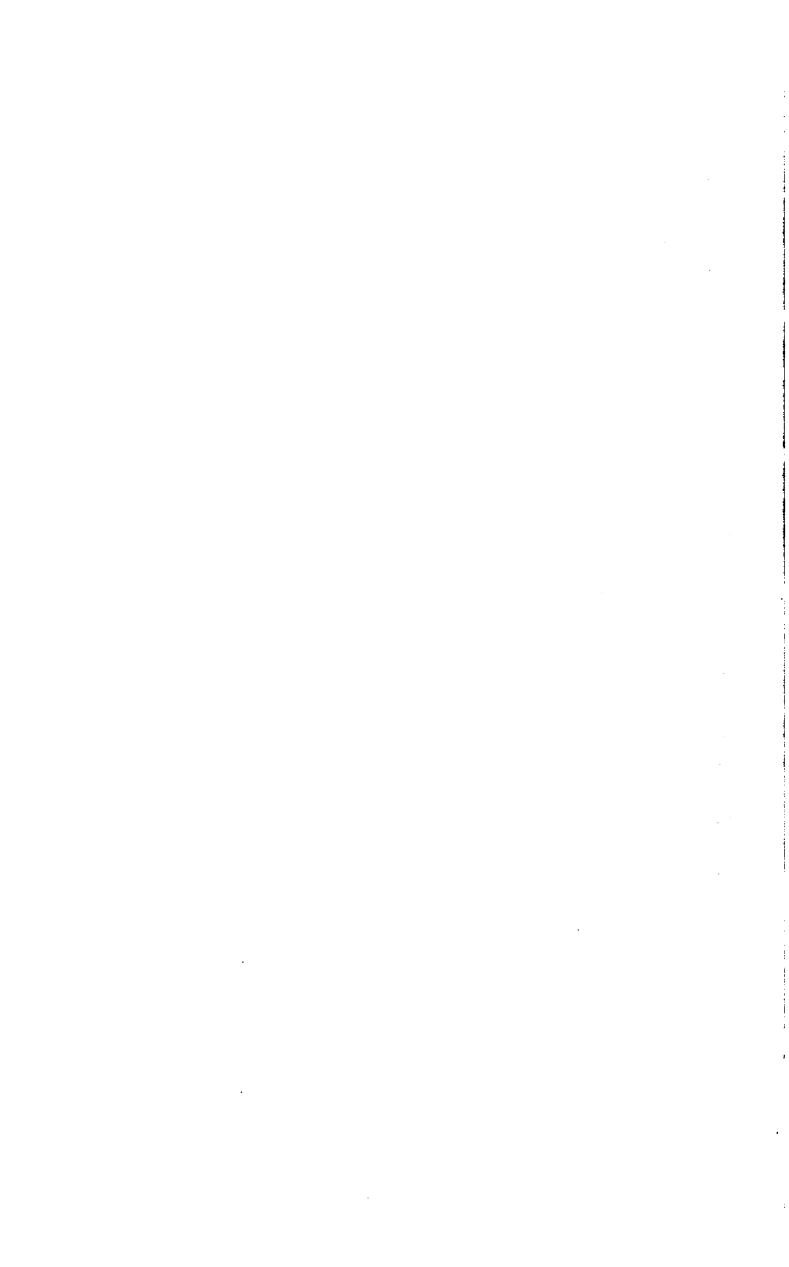
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Frontispiece.

FREIBURG.

IN THE BLACK FOREST.

BY
CHARLES W. ^{OC}WOOD, F

AUTHOR OF
"THROUGH HOLLAND," "ROUND ABOUT NORWAY," ETC.



LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY AND SON,
Publishers in Ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen.

1882.

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IN THE BLACK FOREST.

CHAPTER I.

QUEENBOROUGH—FLUSHING—COLOGNE—BADEN-BADEN—
WALDE.

THE lights of Queenborough, few and far between, served only to increase the gloom and render darkness yet more visible. Faint flashes were reflected here and there on the wet, smooth platform, and one felt rather than saw that rain was falling. A solitary passenger would have needed as careful piloting as the blind, through the tenebrous ways that led from the train to the boat; but the travellers were Legion, and followed each other like a flock of sheep or a string of turkeys; or any other simile that suggests a comparison

between the animal and human world—only the sheep and the turkeys would have been much more picturesque and interesting.

Certainly, when the saloon lights (a blaze of brilliancy after the late blackness of darkness) threw their magnificent beams upon the assemblage as it poured down the staircase with the noise of an artillery charge (we all know the sound and the sequel), a more grotesque group could scarcely have been seen. Englishmen, with loud voices and apparently a power of being in all places at once; Germans, with blue spectacles and mouths wide open; all struggling with huge carpet-bags and with each other for precedence. Finally they fell into rank; a long *queue* was formed, and each in his turn received from the steward a ticket and a number indicating his night quarters on board.

A bad and unpleasant system to begin with. To have to make one of a string of travellers; to find your neighbour treading upon your heels, digging into your ribs, putting you to torture with the irons of his valise or the edge

of his hat-box, all thrust upon you with unceremonious freedom, and a sublime indifference to your personal feelings : to have to endure all this for half an hour or so (if the passengers are numerous), with the boat possibly rocking like a cradle, is enough to try the strongest constitution and the temper of an angel. Luckily I was better provided, and could afford to look on with such a smile of peace and serenity as you may often see on the face of a Chinese image (benevolent, superior, but provoking) ; but this side view only enabled one the better to observe the unpopularity of the method. It was a lottery ; each traveller had to take what was given him, and was expected to be thankful for what he received : no remark or remonstrance met with the slightest attention. One, who had telegraphed for a cabin for three, was coolly told that he had it. And so, in truth, he had, but it was the very worst cabin in the whole vessel.

As to the boats : the main deck cabins were so badly ventilated that probably none ventured to sleep with closed doors ; the lower deck

cabins must have been worse than the Black Hole of Calcutta. It is a matter for wonder, too, why, on all boats, the berths should be so uncompromisingly hard, that for ease and comfort you might as well lie down upon the floor. Here, if anywhere, a couch that will give you some chance of sleep would be a blessing, certainly not in disguise, and if spring mattresses were substituted for hard planks, managers and directors would secure the thanks of the world, and find themselves deluged with popularity and pieces of plate—testimonials from an appreciative and grateful public.

Altogether, the crossing *viâ* Queenborough and Flushing was so little agreeable that, rather than endure it a second time, I returned by way of Brussels and Calais—and felt that I had done well. But the Flushing route is cheap, and therefore popular and very much frequented; and any one at all fastidious in these matters must expect to have the keen edge of his sensibilities somewhat roughly handled.

The scanty lights of Queenborough and Sheerness flashed out a friendly farewell as we

steamed away. Soon all was left far behind ; a drizzling rain was still falling ; one by one the passengers disappeared, like stars before the summer dawn (by far too poetical a comparison for the occasion) ; the decks were left to solitude and the officers on duty.

Early next morning the long, low, flat shores of Holland gladdened one with a sight of land. Windmills, as usual, were conspicuous ; cottages with white walls, and green shutters, and red-tiled roofs, stood out in picturesque contrast with each other ; low trees invited cattle to their shade ; long broad reaches of green meadows stretched away and away in velvety softness that refreshed the eye. But this morning the cattle had no need of shade ; it was sunshine that was absent ; a steady downpour of rain was doing its best to depress mankind. As to the crowd now filling the decks—if it looked quaint and grotesque last night, what sort of an appearance did it present this morning ? Unshaven, unkempt, every mark of a hasty toilet or no toilet at all, haggard and weary, thoroughly wretched, noisy, gesticulating—it might have

been a cargo of restored lunatics from Bedlam, or an importation of wild men and women from the backwoods of America.

For a whole hour after landing at Flushing we were caged up in the close and certainly not clean restaurant at the station. On all sides sounds of refreshing drove sensitive ears to the verge of madness. A brisk trade was carried on in raw ham placed between little rolls ; sausages flavoured with garlic disappeared as by magic ; coffee, beer, and tea, threw their exhalations around, according to the taste, temperament, and patronage, of the individual. But all disagreeables were over and to be remembered no more when the room was exchanged for a comfortable carriage, and the train went onwards. Henceforth there were no more unpleasant hours, even until that day, some weeks later, when the white cliffs of Dover opened up to welcome our vessel advancing from the shores of Calais.

We steamed through the flat country of Holland, and, in spite of the dismal day, the old richness of colouring, for which the Nether-

lands is so remarkable, stood out conspicuously. Long stretches of pasture ; low, melancholy trees swaying in the wind and weeping abundantly ; dykes in all directions, without which Holland might soon add to its name and description, "In the Marshes." Here and there, standing on the very edge of these dykes and gazing at its own sweet image, a subdued stork, drooping on one leg, apparently lost in contemplation ; wondering, perhaps, why it rains so often and so much in that dear old Holland, where water is so abundant and despised that the worthy Dutchman still follows the example of his great ancestor, Mynheer van Dunck, and mixes his Schiedam "a quart of the former to a pint of the latter daily." Nor is he altogether in the wrong, for Schiedam at its best is a good thing, and not to be trifled with.

Making way, the clouds occasionally broke, and a gleam of sunshine—and of Paradise—burst upon the delighted vision. Great shadows, "rolling in glorious array," swept over the land. But it was soon over ; the gates would close again behind the sunshine and shut out Paradise,

and the rain would come down with more energy than ever.

There were stoppages, too, every now and then, at quaint Dutch towns, with old-fashioned buildings that promised to repay one's love for antiquity, if we would only sojourn there awhile. But to-day no such sojourn entered into our plans; onward and forward was the inevitable motto, out of Holland into the Fatherland. I know not whether it was fancy or imagination, but it seemed that one could almost trace the boundary line separating Holland from Germany, so quickly changed the character of the country; just as I have often fancied it possible to discern that which separates England from Scotland.

Certainly, very soon after quitting Holland, the German hills and undulations plainly declared that we were in a new country and amongst another race. And still on we went, and still wept the skies, until, at two o'clock, above a broad, flat, surrounding plain, the grand towers and steeples of Cologne Cathedral reared heavenward. Passing by strong fortifications (of

which the Germans are so fond) and busy signs of the life of a large town, the train came to a stand at Cologne station.

But for its cathedral Cologne would be nothing in the world beyond a town on a very uninteresting part of the Rhine—a rallying-point for those who are going up the river and have its beauties before them, or for those who have come down and left all behind. If the Rhine at Cologne has any grand feature, it lies in its breadth ; and gazing from the heights of the railway bridge, it is not without a certain noble attraction, to which is added all the romance of its history and reputation ; a romance which casts its halo over it, reaching even to the tame shores of Holland.

The cathedral is the one great attraction of Cologne, and perhaps it will be said that it needs no other. It throws its weird influence over the otherwise commonplace town, and draws its votaries from the very ends of the earth. Some of our favourite stories of childhood have been of the wondrous building which the Archfiend would never allow to be completed ; tales of the Seven deadly Sins ; taking

hold of the imagination as powerfully as any fairy tale or story of the Arabian Nights. And amongst the child-dreams of many of us has been the hope that, in a far-distant future, we might live to gaze upon that wonderful structure that we fully believed was never the work of man alone.

The old guide led the way to the Triforium gallery, and we made the circuit of the cathedral, looking down upon that amazing extent of white stone, that multitude of arches and pillars. Then, passing out to the exterior gallery, where you get so fine a view of the town, and the Rhine, and the far-off Seven Mountains (are they typical of the Seven deadly Sins?) that stand out so conspicuously on approaching Bonn, he pointed upwards to the figures of Faust and Mephistopheles, stretching out, like a couple of gurgoyles, gazing at each other—and for ever gazing—from opposite corners.

Straightway we fall into a reverie of years ago, when the story was first familiar to us. As in a vision, there arose a quiet, far-off home, in a foreign land, where “the daily round, the com-

mon task," was sweetened by all that makes home bright and blest ; where twilight evenings were consecrated to tales of wonder and marvel that influenced the child-minds there assembled with an undying power : legends in which this spot and building played no ill a part. Then a grey mist, representing the chasm of intervening years, blurred the scene ; years that are to most so full of unfruitful hopes and aspirations ; dreams that, like our Spanish Castles, and our cherished hopes, and our best endeavours, come to nought ; a time when we thought so fondly our life's barque would sail for ever in the smooth waters of a southern wind, but oh, the rough waves of a prevalent east ! Then all fell away to the realities of the present—the pain and mystery of life that is never absent from some minds—as the voice of the old guide awoke the echoes, asking, with a touch of pathos and excusable impatience, "if the Herr had done gazing at Faust and Mephistopheles, and was ready to proceed ?"

So we came back to earth, figuratively and literally, and returned to the body of the won-

derful structure, and gazed upwards, as we had just gazed downwards, at the immense height, the wonderful beauty of the arches, the forest of pillars, the glorious aisles. Yet, with all this beauty before one, was the hope of early dreams fulfilled—the anticipated pleasure of bygone years realized? A thousand times NO. When is it ever? It is the difference between fact and fancy, romance and reality; between looking at a picture and looking at life.

It was all left behind the next morning in the express, bound for Baden-Baden, where one fairly enters within the territories of the Black Forest. Passing through a considerable extent of flat, uninteresting country, the train entered the Valley of the Rhine. Hills and romantic crags rose right and left, vineyards and gardens giving a certain cultivated luxuriance to the slopes, fantastic châteaux adding life and spirit to the hillsides. These vineyards from a distance are less picturesque—it has been said before—than our hop-gardens in England; but a closer inspection brings out the beauty of the leaf, the delicacy of the tendril, the grace of the drooping

fruit—and comparison yields in favour of the latter.

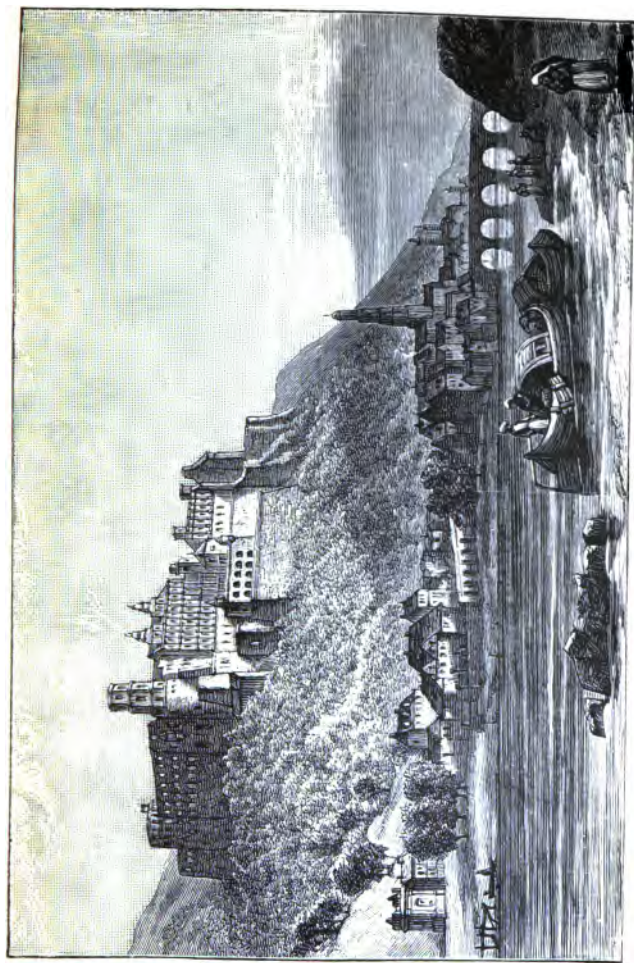
Between the hills the river flowed in its course to the sea, growing tamer and yet more tame towards Cologne, losing all life and beauty, its very colour, as it runs through the Dutch territories and expires. But at Bonn and upwards all the romance begins ; all that strange wonder of crag and rock, romantic towns and villages, and ruined castles ; valleys stretching far away, and hills rising above and behind each other ; the thousand and one legends, supernatural and otherwise, that have enshrined the river in the hearts of the German people, and made their love for it almost a religion.

To-day it was so shallow as to lose much of its grandeur. Steamers passed us on their way to Cologne, crowded with tourists, consisting without doubt for the most part of English, Dutch, and Americans. For the Dutch have taken a fancy of late years to travel in search of the picturesque, and enlarge their views of life by observing the minds, manners, and morals of other nations. The Germans, too, in large num-

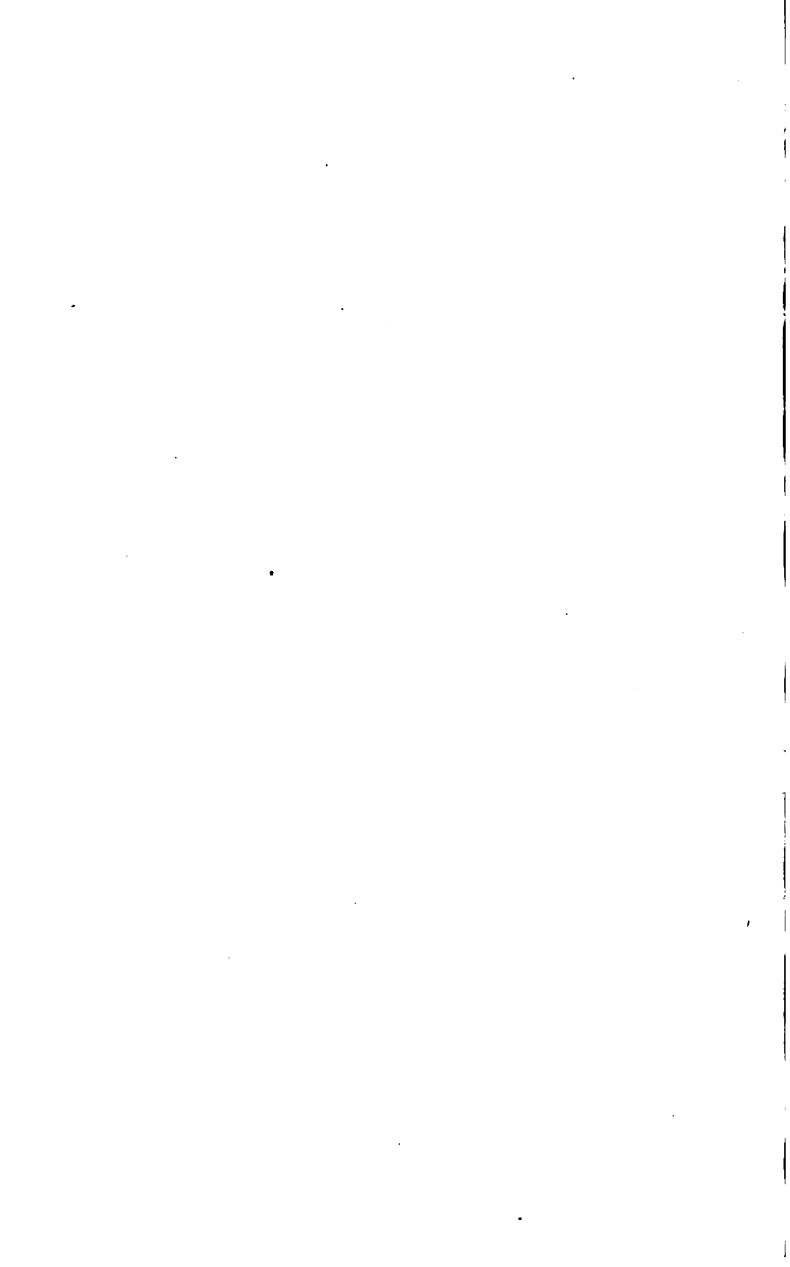
bers seem to be following this example ; so that presently we shall become a world of travellers, and the resources of the ingenious will be taxed to provide for the necessities of a wandering, though not Hebrew, race.

The train went on through many a well-known spot ; pausing now at good old Darmstadt, now at romantic Heidelberg, with its surrounding hills and vales, its wonderful old castle. You may pace those ruined terraces on a moonlit night, and fancy a ghost lurking in every shadow. As indeed there is—the ghosts of a departed glory and grandeur, whose name is Legion ; the ghosts of a thousand marvellous tales of superstition and wonder. And you turn your gaze to the broad-flowing river far below, upon which the moon is casting her jewelled rays ; you gaze and gaze, and fancy each moment that Undine, with pale loveliness and floating tresses, will rise and bid you plunge beneath the calm surface to her fairy palace ; a bidding you will have no power to disobey.

But to-day it was all broad daylight, prosy as anything can be in these regions of beauty and



HEIDELBERG.



romance, where the very atmosphere possesses a quality that stirs the imagination, and for the time plunges you into a world where realities dissolve and the ideal cheats you into a belief of happiness. And every now and then, for one moment—is it not so?—the burden of life falls away with as great relief as when the pack fell from the back of Christian ; and a strange soul-sense steals over the spirit, begotten of all this divine beauty of creation, that, while it lasts, is surely a foretaste of a celestial world—a sense, evanescent as a vapour, fleeting as the trail of a meteor, almost as soon gone as it is come ; within us, yet seemingly as far off and intangible as the flush of sunset, which one moment colours a passing cloud and dies the next in the far-off ether.

The beauties of nature, and also certain strains of music, address themselves to the infinite in man, find their response, and, for a moment, raise him to Paradise. And though it is but for a moment, and though the floodgates of that sudden glory fall back and close, and leave him cold and dark and disconsolate, yet it has been

a vision, an experience ; it is never forgotten, and he is the better for it ever after. It is an earnest of a time coming when the "burden of this mortality" shall have given place to an ideal which the spirit recognizes even here, but the mind cannot apprehend.

It was prosy daylight to-day ; but the prosi-ness lurking on the banks of the Rhine, and peering out of the ruined turrets and crumbling walls of Heidelberg Castle, would form an inexhaustible mine of romance elsewhere. The train soon left the river, and passed onwards, amidst vineyards and great stretches of land planted with waving Indian corn and huge pumpkins, and the large, strong, ungraceful leaf of the tobacco plant ; hop-gardens here and there, growing to a giant height unknown in England. Mountains always in view ; now near, as the valley closed in ; now so far off that their soft wavy undulations melted into space. Between five and six o'clock we entered the lovely district surrounding Baden-Baden, the pine-clad hills that announce the region of the Black Forest, and at length the train passed into the shelter of the station—

shelter much needed, for there came down a shower of hail the like of which I had never seen ; that cruel hail that does come down in this land in the hottest weather, and without warning, and is the terror of the vine-grower and the destruction of his crops.

Few towns equal Baden-Baden in the beauty of its situation and surroundings. No spot in the Black Forest abounds more in romantic drives and short, charming excursions, where day after day you may choose some fresh elevation for your pilgrimage, and gaze upon a wide, far-reaching view. You may get more closely into the beauty of the Forest, the woods and trees and their enchanting solitudes ; but Baden-Baden is favoured in all ways. As a sojourn it is gay and pleasant ; and you may combine duty with amusement by drinking the waters (very brimstone-y some of them are), and listening to the band that plays here thrice daily.

The Kursaal, or Conversation-house, is a gorgeous building, where balls are held during certain nights of the season. In one of its wings there is a café and restaurant, largely patronized

and loudly appreciated : in the other is a reading-room, equally frequented, but where absolute silence reigns. Several old duennas aroused one's curiosity, as to what their past lives and histories had been. One of them especially, ancient and withered, bore traces still of a once marvellous beauty. Daily she came, daily sat in the same seat, read the same newspapers, and studied the politics of the world. She was wonderfully arrayed ; a young girl's dress upon an octogenarian ; but there was a melancholy in her eyes it made one melancholy to see. Evidently she regretted the days of her lost youth and beauty—a regret that is so keen and bitter where it exists ; regretted the palmy days of Baden, when gambling was the fashion and the rage, the ruin and despair of multitudes. Of a certainty she had taken part in that fatal excitement ; one could see it almost written upon her features, still handsome and aristocratic in their old age. A vain woman of the world, who had found out that that world, taken from her point of view, was altogether unsatisfying and a mistake.

Another old coquette would sit night after

night at the open window, airing her faded beauty, and wondering why she ceased to attract admiration. Such characters are to be found in all Continental watering-places, to which fashion and a crowd periodically resort ; and the excitement of bygone life, the light of other days, is fed by an artificial substitute, without which these poor frail minds and bodies would soon cease to be.

Sit there of an evening, in the gardens, watching the crowds strolling about, or occupying chairs and benches, talking in animated groups, or listening to the music, and what a different scene it all is from anything to be found in England ! It appeals, no doubt, to the lighter and more volatile part of our nature ; but then, it must be remembered, as a dead and gone friend used to say, that volity is not frivolity. The scene is at least gay and enlivening, unbends the mind, and is all innocent enough.

The English do not understand amusing themselves after this manner ; they are more heavy even than the Germans, at any rate in their recreations. And, taking us all round, are we one

bit the better? Probably our climate has as much to do with it as anything. How is it possible to go in for al-fresco concerts and entertainments when we scarcely know one day whether the temperature of the next will be Siberian or Indian?

Baden-Baden lies in a hollow or depression : its villas are dotted about in romantic, irregular positions ; a narrow stream runs through the town, spanned here and there by a small rustic bridge ; long avenues, shaded by trees,—the Lichtenthal is the principal avenue—form pleasant drives and walks. Nothing can well be prettier than Baden itself—except its surroundings. On all sides rise the hills of the Black Forest, dark and dense to their summits with pine woods. Here and there an old ruined castle stands out, suggestive of a bygone age of martial glory, and chivalry, and gay cavaliers “who loved, and laughed, and rode away.”

One of the pleasantest excursions is that to the Old Castle, the most conspicuous of the ruins, an hour's uphill walk from the town. The houses are soon left behind, and the air as you

begin to ascend is laden with the perfume of acacias. Before you are the pine-clad hills, looking cool, dense, and majestic, as if nothing disturbed their serenity. To the right a green valley, through which runs a stream of clear, rippling water. The banks are clad with an emerald green, that stands out in vivid, refreshing contrast with that far-off background of sombre heights.

Soon the New Castle is reached, a building old enough to satisfy an antiquarian, and only called new in contradistinction to the Old Castle—now long since gone to wreck and ruin. I turned into the New Castle, as in duty bound, and inspected the state rooms, where hung portraits of dead and gone members of the Grand Ducal Family, and of the Royal Families of Europe with which they have intermarried in the course of centuries. One of the fairest and pleasantest faces was that of Louisa, Queen of Prussia (whose life has been so well written by Miss Hudson), taken when almost a girl, full of sweetness and firmness of character.

The dungeons were, perhaps, the most inte-

resting part of the castle, where Lynch law is said to have reigned, and tortures and horrors to have been committed in past ages. Such an atmosphere still clings about them. The old woman who conducted us (some half a dozen Germans were waiting the inspection when I entered) led the way down a mysterious and gloomy staircase of thick masonry, terminating in a square chamber, damp and earthy, the abode, it might well be, of "innumerable creeping things."

Here she opened a suspicious-looking closet, which seemed full of instruments of torture and miniature gallows. But these, on closer inspection, turned out to be nothing more terrible than lanterns, and long tallow candles on flat pieces of wood. Lighting them, she gave us one each, and we filed off one after the other, a weird procession headed by a woman, going to do battle with the powers of darkness. So we marched through the chambers, flashing out such feeble rays into the gloom as our lanterns gave forth.

Massive walls surrounded us; thick doors



BADEN-BADEN, WITH VIEW OF THE NEW CASTLE.

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composed of one huge block of stone, that scarcely yielded to the whole weight of the body. For a moment the heart of the assembled group stood still, and the old woman's face turned pale, as she swung one of these heavy doors behind us, and swung it too far : there was neither bolt nor bar nor handle to bring it back. We thought ourselves entombed in a room whose walls were many feet thick, whence no voice or sound could reach to the outer world. Not an enviable position, for soon our candles would expire, and leave us in the blackness of darkness. The little group began to feel a sense of suffocation, of being walled up alive. No bell here to sound an alarm.

"There are times when I verily believe the spirit of the evil deeds of the past still lurks in these dungeons," cried our conductress. "Only once before has this abominable door served me this trick ; and then, as now, it seemed as if invisible hands had pushed to the heavy stone work and oiled the rusty hinges."

"The spirit of a demon," suggested one. "Mephistopheles himself, perhaps, thirsting for more victims ; enraged that we have fallen upon

enlightened times, and that Baden is under the rule of the good Grand Duke."

"You may say that," cried the woman. "A good duke indeed. He might well be called the father of his people."

"For pity's sake," cried another, "cease this gossiping, and open the door of the tomb if you can. What on earth would become of us shut up here, without light, or air, or any means of rescue? We should soon be dead."

The woman laughed. "I think," she said, "an hour or two's close confinement would set us free. My good man would miss me at the dinner hour, or rather he would miss the signs of preparation. And though possibly he might be willing to leave me to my fate," she added, with a humorous grin, "yet, for the sake of his dinner, he would seek me out. We all know the way to a man's heart."

"Donnerwetter!" cried he who had remonstrated before, "are you going to keep us here suffocating until it is too late? I feel half dead already."

The woman turned upon him a look of

supreme disdain. "This room is called the Question Chamber," she explained in the most tantalizing manner, whilst the door stood yet closed and we in jeopardy. "Near by is a dark passage, leading to a trap-door, called the 'Virgin's Kiss.' It is said that victims were thrown down this trap-door on to the statue of a woman covered with sharp instruments, which cut and mangled the poor wretch until he bled to death. Ai! ai! Men at their worst are awful creatures indeed!"

With that she carefully inserted her fingers to the side of the stone, and in a few moments the door rolled back, and we were free men and women once more.

"I believe," said I, "that all this time you have merely been playing upon the fears of your audience. You knew well enough that you had the door under control. Confess now."

The woman looked slyly up out of the corners of her eyes; she had evidently a turn for jokes and dry humour.

"Mein Herr," she replied, somewhat in the spirit of an oracle, "those who travel must

expect to see strange sights and encounter singular adventures. I knew *you* were not very alarmed at our imprisonment. As for these Germans," lowering her voice, "a little fright now and then does them no harm and does me good. They ask me all kinds of questions, give me no end of trouble, keep me waiting twice as long as any one else does, and in the end, for the most part, forget that the labourer is worthy of his hire."

There was no greed of gain in the remark, no delicate attempt at a hint; it came out so spontaneously that it was evidently meant simply as the statement of a fact, a bit of her experience, and nothing more.

We filed back with our lanterns, a released procession; and, presently, issued out again into the pure air and blue skies, twice pure and blue after those dismally attractive dungeons.

I continued my solitary, but by no means lonely, way towards the Old Castle, mounting high and yet higher, beneath pine trees, through footpaths that were short cuts upwards: nothing before me but the dead wall of mountain and

forest ; jutting rocks here and there conspicuous ; melancholy, beautiful firs fringing the outlines of the summits.

After a good bit of ascending, steep only towards the end, a turn in the road brought me to the old ruin, at the foot of which a photograph stall strangely blended together past and present. On through the old gateway, and leaving a restaurant to the left (to what ends of the earth will you wander and *not* find a restaurant?), I was soon amidst crumbling walls and ruined arches, and stairs more picturesque and beautiful in decay than in the days of their youth. Lordly halls these rooms must have been, in bygone generations, when fair dames and gallant cavaliers graced them, and merry voices echoed far and near, and distant horns rang through the vast woods.

The first thing to arrest attention was the weird sound of an Æolian harp, which seemed to linger in the air. But, mounting the crumbling stairs and passing round a terrace protected by a railing, it was discovered in one of the ancient windows, secured by iron bars. The day

was boisterous, and the instrument kept up an incessant shriek, most mournful, most melancholy, "like the wail of a soul in pain." It might have been the long-drawn sighs of a familiar spirit of the place, for ever haunting it, ever restless and unhappy. Now it seemed to scream above the tops of the trees, now to whirl round and round the ruined walls, and fill the air with its agony. It was out of harmony with the old ruin, and destroyed all its solitude and solemnity.

But what a view met the eye on all sides ! Far down, sleeping in a hollow, lay Baden, a small spot of civilized life amidst the vast surrounding plains and fields of creation. At one's feet stood the outer portions of the castle in jagged and crumbling ruins ; the trees within their precincts of a purer, livelier green than those beyond. Surrounding the town the mountains rose in chains and piles, hill after hill, and tier beyond tier, an eternity of forest and verdure, as it seemed : hills clothed with the dark pines that give so sombre yet true a name to the Black Forest. The walls of the ruined castle were



ENTRANCE TO THE OLD CASTLE. *Page 28.*

overgrown with moss and lichen and numberless creepers.

Fringes of pines displayed themselves in the immediate neighbourhood, each one distinct and detached from the other ; but beyond, and far away as the eye could follow, the black mountains accumulated in dense dark masses and outlines. Stretches of velvety fields and slopes here and there relieved the gloom. White roads twisted, snake-like, about the vast scene. To the right stretched great uninteresting plains, the flowing Rhine a conspicuous object, but here not more romantic than the tamest of rivers. In the distance rose the long chain of the Vosges mountains, with their soft, wavy, graceful undulations, though too far off to be very conspicuous or interesting. Small streams ran their course, and villages dotted the plain, their red roofs rising in contrast with the sombre pines. The wind swept great white clouds across the sky, throwing the blue beyond into deep relief, whilst they cast huge shadows upon the plain that chased each other and dissolved as the clouds died out in space.

I gazed long at the scene: that marvellous picture of nature of which one never tires, no matter how often it may be repeated. One tree, one stream, one field, one hill, may resemble another, but a thousand times multiplied and a thousand times seen, the last look is as fresh and beautiful to the mind, as invigorating to the spirit, as the first. The only sad spot was the ruin itself, which spoke so loudly of an age and generation when other eyes were gazing upon those scenes; as, in turn, other eyes again will gaze, when these days have passed away into history.

Coming down from the ruin, the woman who kept a stall of carved wood work espied a victim, cried up her wares and strove hard to drive a bargain. But with the best intentions in the world one can scarcely perambulate a whole day through a forest with a cuckoo clock in one hand and a pair of elegant chimney ornaments in the other. So, for the sake of helping a fellow creature, ever so slightly, on the difficult road of life, the traveller falls back upon the small objects that fit into the pocket. And if the re-

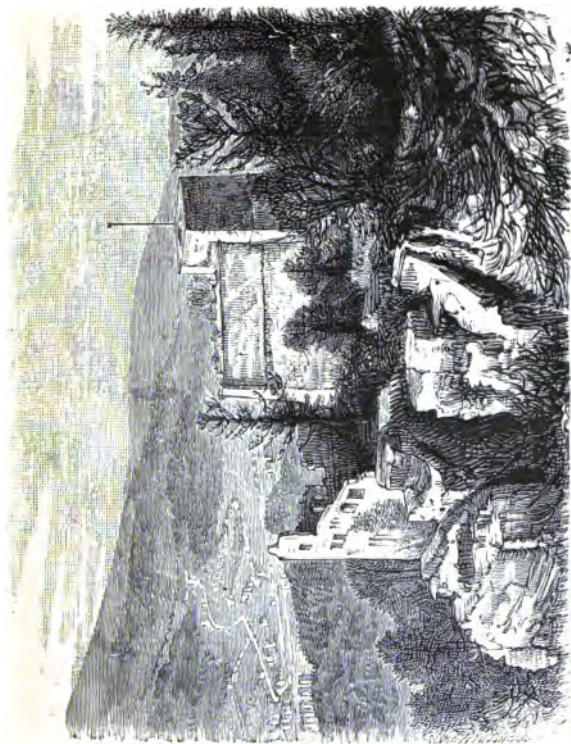
duction in price is not quite in proportion to the difference in size and labour, he quietly shuts his eyes to the discrepancy. We have so often to close our eyes to a good deal that is going on in this wicked world.

A last look at the Old Castle, and branching off to the left I presently came to the rough steps cut out of the gigantic rocks that look towards Baden; steps that lead to the summit of the heights, whence again one sees all the glorious view, but from a somewhat different point. Next I found myself in the thick of the wood, revelling in the loneliness, and dense, almost appalling solitude. Not a bird was visible, not a chirp was heard; and more or less throughout the Black Forest this absence of bird life is somewhat conspicuous. No doubt they are better heard and seen in the spring when they are in full song; for occasionally remarking to the inhabitants upon the absence of the feathered tribe, they seemed aggrieved, and thought they had as many birds as other lands and countries. If it be so, certainly in that merry month of August of which I write they had taken to them-

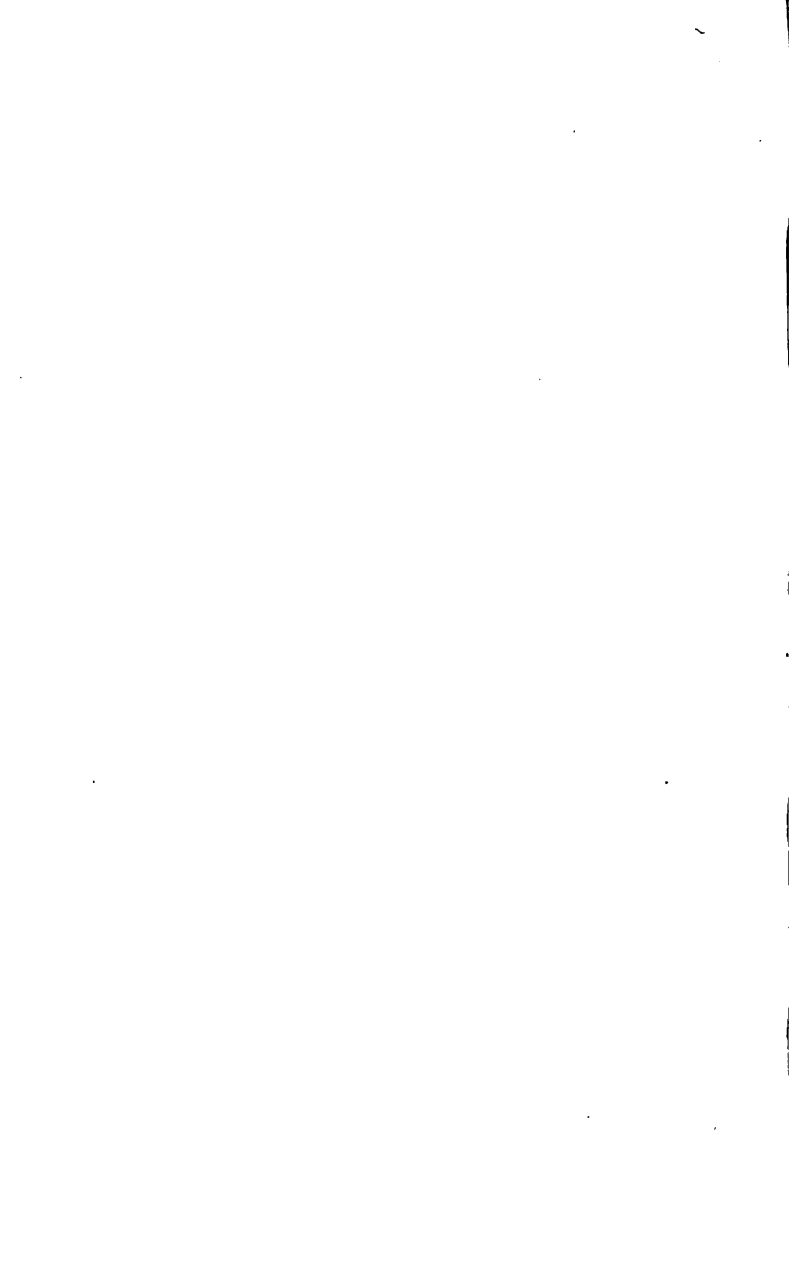
selves wings, and gone off on a pilgrimage of love or duty.

To plunge into the thick of the wood, to wander at will, to have the small excitement of losing and recovering your way, this is really to enjoy to the utmost the resources of the Black Forest, or of any other forest. The spots unmentioned in guide books, the tracks unbeaten by the ordinary tourist—it is these that charm. Never can I forget that long, lonely, glorious walk after leaving the Old Castle. Hour after hour, and still the woods ceased not. No one interrupted the solitude; I was utterly alone—as much so as Robinson Crusoe on his desert island: no trace that man inhabited the earth, save here and there a stack of wood neatly piled up; young trees sawn into logs, and bearing testimony that now, as in the primæval days, “man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour.”

Ferns and bracken grew in profusion of loveliest, purest green; wild flowers abounded; paths led in all directions—one knew not whither; mile after mile the sombre pines



THE OLD CASTLE.



seemed inexhaustible. Long vistas of forest ground, lovely glades, continually opened up, chequered by lights and shades, and long-drawn shadows cast by the sun as it struggled through the pines. To stand awhile and listen was to realize the intensity of silence ; no chirping of birds, "mate answering to mate," or flutter of wings, or ring of woodman's axe. Utter solitude. In all senses of the word it was refreshing and restoring to mind, body, and spirit.

At length a village ; sounds of life and sight of human habitation, though not on a large scale. A quaint, picturesque hamlet, with whitewashed houses and blackened rafters, and creepers over-running the porches ; great fuchsias and roses and geraniums. Plum trees grew in the middle of the road, and grapes trailed their leaves and fruit over the walls of the cottages up to the very roofs. In many of them the ground floor was turned into a stable and abandoned to the animals. Here and there a pretty, laughing face peeped inquisitively from a latticed window, set off by a framework of green leaves. The few children in the road, all with naked feet, ran

away as if they had suddenly espied an arch enemy, but quickly returned and made friends when bribed by the offer of an infinitesimal coin. Evidently these little people had been taught wisdom in their day and generation.

Presently the cemetery came into view; a humble, melancholy little spot, where newly-made graves had small crosses tied round with ragged white muslin. There was nothing here to tempt one to linger, and passing out I chanced upon a young lad of some ten or twelve years, as quick and intelligent as if he had been brought up in a town, and far more picturesque. We immediately struck up a firm understanding, under the influence of which he told me his little history and his little life with a charm and a naïveté and an innocence—ah, how much to be envied!

There was a strange and unaccountable refinement about him, somewhat sad to see, for it was almost out of place, suggesting frail health, or a nature worthy of a better lot. And when I asked him his name, and in the gentlest and most musical of voices he replied, "Walde," my

heart went out to this little namesake. He was barefooted, and dressed very raggedly, his small knickerbockers all holes and fringes; but in spite of it all the lad was innately a little gentleman; and would be; until, growing up to manhood, and mixing with his kind—a kind less favoured than he—his finer nature would lose some of its sensitiveness. And better so, perhaps.

I longed to carry off the lad, and work upon the soil that looked as if it might be fruitful—wood that would bear carving. But how many wishes and ideas flash through the heart or the brain in the course of a lifetime that it would be difficult or impossible to carry out? And after all, a tree usually thrives best on its own soil. He who rises by his own endeavours gains with each step the experience that he needs; but suddenly transplant a young nature, and failure is very likely to be the end of it.

He was quite a little scholar, this Walde, and knew a good deal about geography and history for a lad so far out of the world. His father had long been dead, and his mother kept the house together by washing for the great people

in Baden. They had a hard struggle for it, but managed to get along somehow. He had brothers and sisters, but was the eldest of all.

Seeing the little fellow was happy in his company, and by no means anxious to part, we agreed that he should accompany me to the ruins of the castle on the hill just above us: ruins as old, apparently, but not quite so extensive, as those I had visited that morning. We climbed the hill as far as the inevitable restaurant, and the little fellow ran off for the key, and piloted me upwards (where no guide was wanted, but it was a pleasant delusion on both sides), and together we surveyed the marvels of nature; and together admired them: the one lost in contemplation of the perfect scene; the other, perhaps, in wonder that so much trouble should be taken for so small a recompense, merely a view that was to him a matter of everyday life.

On our way back we were overtaken by a sudden shower, and sheltered in a cottage doorway, and looked on to that portion of it given up to barn work and the chopping of wood.

Out came the good woman of the house, and with an air that really might have become a duchess, pressed me to enter and be seated. The offer was declined with equal politeness—I saw that she was at her evening meal—and she remained standing at the door, only too glad to have a chat with one lately arrived from the far-off world.

Her good man was out at work, she said, carpentering ; her cats were in the field, hunting mice, of which they had an abundance. She was quite alone with her little daughter and niece, who now appeared on the scene ; the latter delicate and deformed, and in need of frequent visits to the doctor, said the aunt. Yes, she knew little Walde ; every one knew him ; he was a general favourite ; a good boy, who went regularly to school. His mother was hard-working ; but when the man was gone from the household, the woman's hardest work was, after all, not much better than starvation.

But the shower and the clouds passed away, out came the sun again, and Walde and I continued our journey. The pleasant and in-

telligent woman dismissed me with a vigorous hand-shake, evidently delighted at having entertained a stranger (though she little knew how very far from an angel) unawares.

Walde and I parted where three roads met, at the foot of a large road-side cross of which so many are seen in the Black Forest. I held before him two silver coins, one twice the value of the other. He was sharp enough to choose the weightier.

"If I give it you, what will you do with it?" I said.

"Buy books for school," he replied.

Was it quite a truthful answer, Walde? Or were you, too, wise in your generation? I would rather believe the former, and so will believe it. Let us keep our faith as long as we can in this weary world. Rude awakenings, one after another, come all too soon, as surely as night follows day: bitter becomes our sweet, shattered our idols, vanished our ideals; until at last we see the Infinite Wisdom that upon this earth and all it contains has stamped the motto: **THIS TOO SHALL PASS AWAY.**

Walde turned to the right, towards home, I to the left, for Baden. The lad looked after me until we were lost to each other. I went on my solitary way—happier, perhaps, for having made him happy ; yet melancholy, too, at having lost sight for good and all of a singularly interesting little fellow.

Walde, Walde, was that silver coin spent in school books ?

CHAPTER II.

MURGTHAL—ACHERN—MUMMELSEE—ALLERHEILIGEN.

AT nine o'clock one morning, with blue skies and a prospect of fair weather, with shadows shortening and disappearing as the sun ran his upward course, I started for Triberg, a three or four days' drive from Baden. A landau and a stout pair of horses had been placed at my disposal; but as it was what is called a return carriage, the sum charged was considerably less than it would otherwise have been. The landlord of the Hotel Victoria had struck the bargain with the coachman, and arranged matters with his usual kindness. It would be difficult to say too much of the courtesy and attention of Herr Grosholz towards his guests.

There was only one mistake made—and it was very much to be regretted. Instead of, at

the outset, taking the way by the exquisite valley of the Murg, the coachman drove straight through the flat, uninteresting high road to Achern. This occupies about three hours, and is perhaps the most dismal bit of travel in the whole of the Black Forest. Fortunately, I had already explored some portion of the Murgthal, but the beauty of what I had seen only made me regret the more what had now been missed.

For there are lovely views to be found in this valley of the Murg—some of the finest in the Black Forest. Take, for instance, the view from the New Castle of Eberstein—a wonderfully pleasant drive from Baden, through a road that winds up into forests and down into hollows ; buried out of sight and sound of all human life and habitation ; taking you into the heart of the woods ; yielding the very utmost enjoyment of the fresh pure delight of these sylvan retreats and solitudes, as you are drawn swiftly through the air by strong, willing horses ; whilst the scent of the pines comes over you in faint, delicious wafts, and the rustle and murmur of the trees make music for you as you journey.

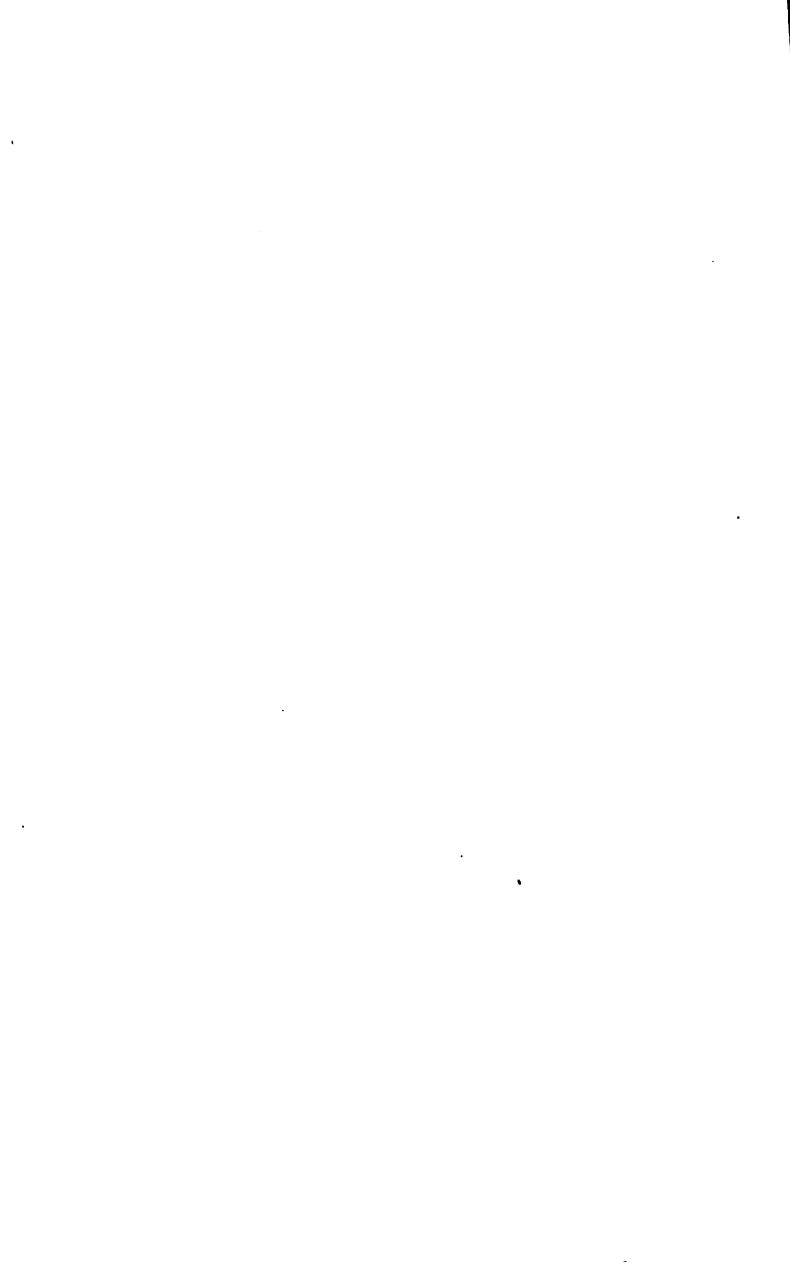
It was after such a drive that the view suddenly burst upon me just outside the gateway of the Castle of Eberstein. An immense, fertile valley, through which the Murg wound its rapid, shallow course. The slopes on which stood the castle were in part cleared and cultivated, in part still given up to the pines and their sombre verdure ; for refreshing as it is to be in the very midst of these forests, undoubtedly they have a melancholy influence when looked upon from a distance.

In the valley, on the borders of the stream, great saw mills were at work, and it is pleasant to enter them and watch the primitive machinery doing its labour, and revel in the pine scent the sawdust so prodigally scatters abroad. Small villages were dotted about ; and, opposite, rose other pine hills, until the ranges seemed to meet and close in the scene. To the left stretched the valley of the Rhine, bounded in the far distance by the soft and graceful undulations of the Vosges mountains.

The castle itself was worthy of inspection. A semi-courtyard, semi-garden with old-fashioned



GERNSBACH, VALLEY OF THE MURG.



flowers formed a picturesque entrance within the gates : and the old armour, the stained glass, the curiosities, ending with the ancient pictures in the oratory, the polished floors and low, wainscotted rooms with their subdued lights, all sent one for the time being into a grand mediæval age, where all was quaint, bold, and vigorous : an age of sunflowers and æstheticism, it may be, but manly and earnest ; guiltless of all the effeminacy that has distinguished the movement of a later age.

Above all, the view from the windows was glorious, framed as it was by the old-fashioned windows which opened to it from all sides of the castle. Terraces of flowers brightened the slopes immediately beneath ; and, still lower, the vineyards spread their green leaves, suggesting ideas of rich and ruby cups, and sparkling wine, and a hospitality that should be freely given by all who have freely received.

A youthful bride and bridegroom—the former one of the loveliest and most graceful girls ever seen : both of them the very types for this beautiful old place—joined me in the inspection

under the guidance of a young and singularly civil housekeeper—a very different character from the original old woman who had taken us through the cold, creepy dungeons of the New Castle of Baden. This blissful pair, I think, threw an extra glamour and romance over the building by their devotion to each other, chivalrous as ever could have been the devotion of any one of the knights who, in ancient days, had worn the armour that surrounded us. Every glance he gave her seemed to say, in the words of the quaint old song :

“Oh, happy, happy, happy fair,
Thine eyes are loadstars and thy tongue sweet air !”

One enjoyed and entered into their unmistakable happiness. For what life has not missed its mark that has not been gilded by a ready sympathy with the joys and sorrows of its fellow pilgrims ?

It was all this, and more, that the coachman had shirked in taking the short cut to Achern.

The landlord of the inn at Achern said this was a source of frequent complaint. The coachmen would avoid the Murgthal when they pos-

sibly could, and when travellers were not on their guard. But it is difficult to be on your guard against an unknown evil. As in this instance, the discovery generally comes too late to be remedied. They are very fond also of shirking the Mummelsee. All this saves a day's journey and more, whilst the full price for time and carriage has usually been charged. Let everyone, therefore, expressly stipulate for the Murgthal and the Mummelsee: and see that he has them.

Allerheiligen was to be the first day's destination, and now, at Achern, I found that it was impossible for the horses to do the Mummelsee, and also to reach Allerheiligen that evening. The distance would be too much for them. The coachman, as usual, had intended to shirk the lake. This, at least, could be remedied, but only by taking another carriage at Achern, and arranging for the Baden coachman to meet me at the point where the roads for Allerheiligen and the Mummelsee met at right angles.

So in this second conveyance I started for the Mummelsee, and mentally registered two resolutions. First: as this was the first time I had

ever taken a return carriage, so should it be the last. Secondly : that in future all arrangements and agreements should be so clearly defined as to render any mistake or misunderstanding impossible.

The road, as far as Achern, had been dreary and monotonous in the extreme : a long succession of bare fields forming a great plain, over which an east wind must sweep with relentless bitterness. Now all this was changed. At once we entered again into the region of the eternal mountains, clad with their endless pines. As we clattered through the small town of Achern, the people came to their doors and windows to see who thus woke the echoes of their "calm and cool retreats." They were all dressed in their best ; for, reader, it was Sunday. If you quarrel with the confession, I cannot help it. Truth must out. I can only admit that I would rather it had been Saturday or Monday ; that in all cases, where it is possible, Sunday should be kept as a day of rest both for man and beast. But abroad, if anywhere, the old saying that "In Rome you must do as Rome does" is of not

infrequent application. Circumstances in part control our actions and determine our course, and we have to bend to them. This does not refer to matters simply of amusement, such as visiting a theatre, or attending a ball. That must be at all times optional, and he who thus transgresses on a Sunday settles the matter with his own conscience. But in the ordinary circumstances, the necessities, the every-day routine of life abroad, there are times when Sunday cannot be observed absolutely after the manner of English ideas and customs.

Roadside cottages enlivened our way. A Sabbath calm seemed to fill the air, even in this land, where Sunday is rather a day of rejoicing and recreation, feasting and merrymaking, pleasure parties and excursions, than a day devoted to religious observances. The coachman, too, had put on his Sunday's best ; but he had passed his meridian, and the maidens no longer looked after him as they had probably looked after him twenty years ago : when, judging by what remained, he must have been a vigorous and comely youth.

He whipped up his horses, and presently we came to the inn where the road to the Mummelsee branched off to the left. Here, resting a few moments, I found the landlord young, handsome, intelligent, and enterprising, and doing his best to learn English with the help of an English lady who had settled in the village : a dangerous occupation, if the lady was young, fair, and fascinating.

We continued our way. The road narrowed, and for a time took to itself almost the likeness of an English lane. The surrounding scenery was varied and beautiful. Distant mountains opposed our progress ; vast pine forests stretched away and away, in which, apparently, a man might lose himself and wander about for ever ; but immediately around us the landscape was more open, somewhat more sylvan and rural : "a valley laughing with green pastures and running streams."

After a time we came to an inn at the foot of the mountain. Here, rather than give the horses more work—and also because a climb through the wood would be far pleasanter—we left the

carriage, and the coachman set out with me towards the Mummelsee, a lake some distance up the height.

Wild and weird enough was the way, as we left the ordinary path and plunged boldly into the midst of brambles and ferns, wild flowers and wild fruit. The guide who accompanied me—more for pleasure than because his services were necessary—seemed to know every inch of the ground, and enjoyed the fun as much as a schoolboy. Before he had gone a hundred yards or so his jacket was off, and his white shirt-sleeves stood out in cool contrast with the sombre pines.

Yet the way was anything but sombre. The sun overhead shot down its rays, throwing lights and shadows across our path, and destroying all sense of gloom. Through the trees we caught glimpses of a blue sky, pure and deep as a sapphire, that, in conjunction with the fresh breeze blowing, raised our spirits to the point of exhilaration; that nameless, peculiar sense of happiness that creeps over one amidst such scenes, and such scenes only.

There was a solemnity, if you will, about the wood and the walk ; a sense of majesty and grandeur and illimitable power inseparable from all vast expanses, such as the sky, the sea, a great mountain, an apparently boundless forest. But the gloom and sadness would only enfold this wood with the setting of the sun, when the shadows would be lost in the darkness, and the desolation of night took the place of all that was now bright and beautiful.

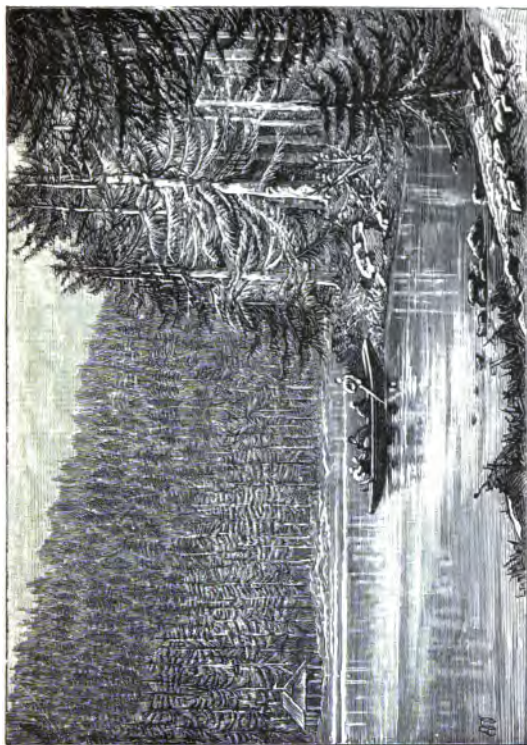
The guide, despite his middle age, skipped about like a wild cat, now disappearing for a moment, and now suddenly returning with a branch of wild raspberries, rich, ripe, large, luscious, such as I had never seen before, never expect to see again. These he presented with an air and a grace that is born with a good many of these men ; that in their station of life comes neither from cultivation nor observation, and to the Englishman of corresponding rank comes never at all. For himself, he did not care for the wild raspberries ; his weakness inclined to bilberries, which grew large too, and abundant, but, reader, were not half so good.

The scent of the pines accompanied us on our upward scramble, and, beneath our feet, a carpet more beautiful than any that ever came from weaver's loom. Innumerable wild flowers and ferns and delicate shrubs spread their store. But still the birds sang not, nor flew from bough to bough, nor fluttered in their nests. No chirp or whistle, no long-drawn notes ; no raving songs such as I have heard in Alpine groves, where, day and night, floods of melody never ceased—no, not for a moment—from the rapturous throats of the nightingales and the exquisite note of the blackcap. There is a certain old Alpine château, sleeping far above the plain of the Isère, and looking down upon the vast valley, and the sleeping village, and the flowing river, and confronting the opposite range of gigantic hills ; a certain old château, with its groves and gardens, dear to the memory of days that never, never can return. I have listened hour after hour, week after week, to an unbroken flood of music from these feathered songsters, that died away only with the end of spring : a constant, never-ending stream of melody, that

those who have not passed beyond the boundaries of a northern clime can never dream of, or realize, or imagine. Oh, memory, memory ! at once our greatest pleasure and our sharpest pain !

At length, after a good bit of climbing—though climbing within the capacities of the most ordinary walker—we reached something like table-land, and soon came to the lake that reposes so far out of the world, so far above it.

Dark, gloomy, and sombre it looked to-day, in spite of a brilliant sky. Dark, gloomy, and sombre pines fringed it all around, and cast their shadows upon the water, which looked cruel, yea, hungering for a victim. In this land of legends, and wild superstitions, and stories of the supernatural, there is no more favoured spot than the Mummelsee ("Fairy lake," by interpretation) for the arena, if the term may be applied, of marvellous tales and tragedies, the haunts and the deeds of a race other than man. Fays and fairies, goblins and ghouls, imps and vampires, hold revels here, and work



THE MUMMELSEE.

their spells, and enchant the unwary. Enchant them in the literal sense of the word ; not as beauty attracts its votaries, but as the snake its victims.

But the tales and legends of the Mummelsee are for the most part of evil omen and unhappy termination ; terrible and portentous, as befits the aspect of the lake and its desolate situation. Cavaliers lured to their destruction ; men, young and handsome, whose hearts have been won by the fays, then deliberately broken, until the victims have lost their beauty, grown wan and pale, and passed away into spectre-land, silently as one of its inhabitants ; pursued to their death by a fate cruel and persistent ; dying, yet making no sign. One tradition has it, that a fairy would bewitch her lover, lure him to her realms ; there he would live happily, until, in a fatal hour, he betrayed the secret of his love. In a moment a small dart stabbed him to the heart ; from the depths of the lake would rise a wild despairing cry, that floated far into space over the tops of melancholy pines which seemed to rustle and sigh in mournful sorrow and sympathy—

and a red tinge, the life-blood of the victim, would rise and spread itself on the surface of the water.

Cold and cruel, dark and green, the waters looked to-day. The lake is not large, but its remote situation, its wild aspect, its unbroken setting of fir trees, its absolute solitude and desolation, throw their weird influence upon the spectator and encompass him with a spell that cannot be resisted. Of the few lakes in the Black Forest, it is, in consequence, the most interesting and romantic, the one least to be neglected. The other lakes are found in the ordinary way-side, sea-level experience; and though interesting, perhaps beautiful after their kind, they are at best insignificant and of small reputation. The Mummelsee has a distinct individuality of its own, both as to aspect and position. It has one more feature to enhance its charms—it is found only after a certain amount of climbing and hard work. We know how it is in human nature to set store by that which is attained with labour and toil, and to lightly esteem what has been lightly gained.

A trite saying it may be, but, alas! for mankind, a true one.

There was a solitary hut on the borders of the lake, where of course all sorts of wines, beer and spirits were dispensed, including the inevitable kirschwasser, which is to be found all over the Black Forest: excellent when good—a somewhat rare occurrence,—abominable when inferior. Twice only I tasted in this national decoction the true flavour of the cherry, when it was asked for in this “promiscuous” or wandering fashion: and one of these occasions was in the Albthal, at the little half-way inn where the diligence stopped ten minutes to rest the horses. Perhaps, to be quite just, it ought also to be stated that only once did I find the kirschwasser so bad that I thought I was poisoned for good and all, and gave myself up for lost. This, too, by a strange coincidence, was in the Albthal, on a return journey, but at a road-side inn nearer St. Blasien.

At the hut we found a boat, and a youth ready to paddle us about the lake, if we possessed courage equal to a possible encounter

with the ghouls and fairies that inhabited its depths. Our spirits answering to the strain, we soon found ourselves quietly rowing about, taking in from the centre of the water all surrounding points. Gloomy indeed were they, and sombre, whether we contemplated the water or the shore, or the pines that so sadly closed us in on every side.

And as if to prove that fairies were indeed at work, suddenly a black cloud obscured our sky, a rushing wind took the surface of the lake, and went sighing and sougling through the trees, bending their feathery tops, as if they were the plumes of a hearse about to assist at our funeral rites, whilst the blast sang a strain that sounded like a cruel requiem. It turned bitterly cold, and we, heated with walking, began to shiver and shake, and to wonder if, after all, the spirits of the lake were at work and one more victim at least was sought for the sacrifice. The guide quickly donned his jacket; and to destroy all the romance and picturesqueness of the situation by stepping at one bound from the sublime to the ridiculous,

he proceeded to envelop his head in a coloured pocket-handkerchief: a precaution against tooth-ache, to which he said he was a martyr.

The squall was as sudden as it was unexpected, as distinctly unpleasant as either. The surface of the water was disturbed, and our boat rocked us a cradle song in which there was no soothing element; but the lake was too small to admit of real waves, or to suggest at any time the possibility of danger. Well that it was so, for our craft was a crazy old tub of strange, mysterious construction; we had to keep exactly balancing positions, and the slightest move to right or left produced a lurch that threatened to send us to the fairies in a very summary, unsolicited, and possibly unwelcome condition.

But we landed in safety and rejoicing: and to restore circulation—I had almost said animation—sought the shelter of the hut and the healing properties of kirschwasser. It was grateful as manna in the desert; and for once I blessed the inevitable restaurant (truly a *restaurant* in this instance) at the mountain top.

(In Holland, *par parenthèse*, they even go so far as to have one half-way up the tower of Utrecht Cathedral, and thus agreeably combine religion with pleasure and profit. I never found an endeavour to make the best of both worlds carried quite so far as this anywhere else.)

To the guide, the strong waters of the hut must have been far pleasanter than the waters of the lake, for he bravely returned to the charge, and, I was glad to see, was himself again in a very few minutes. But he informed me in confidence that this spirit was an imitation kirschwasser, more palatable than the real thing, but less wholesome. To us, however, its properties were grateful and potent.

So, having recovered, we took our downward journey. Suddenly as the squall had come up, as suddenly it passed over, and warmth and sunshine once more accompanied our steps. It had been a singular coincidence. Had a storm been ordered to bring out the weird, wild, gloomy desolation of the Mummelsee, it could not have arrived more punctually or more *à propos*. Once more, I say, sunshine accompanied our

steps—and rough and rapid they sometimes were. The guide enlivened the way by describing some of his excursions to the Mummelsee, and the curious people he had piloted. By this time, it is unnecessary to say, the handkerchief had been withdrawn, though the jacket kept its place.

“But often as I have been to the Mummelsee,” said he, “never yet have I experienced so sudden a storm as we had to-day. Truly I wondered what was coming next, and whether the fairies at the bottom of the lake were brewing us mischief. How cold it was, too!” he added with a shiver. “I was not sorry to land.”

“Do you then put faith in the evil spirits?” I asked.

“Yes and no,” he replied, with a laugh. “Our land is a very cradle of superstitious tales and legends. Our mothers rock us to sleep with them before we can take in their meaning. In childhood our minds are crammed with them, and at that period we believe all we hear. In manhood we try to shake off these impressions; but something of their influence will stick to us

in spite of our reason. I am not sure that I should be very much surprised if I saw a fairy rise to the surface of the lake and charm me into the fatal plunge."

"At any rate," I said, "you would know what it meant and what to expect."

"Yes," he returned. "And—who can tell?—the change might be for the better. Existence down there might have some charms; up here we work hard and get badly paid."

"Would you row across the lake at midnight?" I asked him out of curiosity; "or even approach it at that hour?"

"I think so," he answered; "but I have never been tried. I am not wanting in courage of that sort. But there are hundreds who would not venture near it after dark for all the wealth of the Duchy. If they did they would die of fright, or go mad, and drown themselves in the water."

"That would come to very much the same thing as if the fairies themselves had accomplished the disaster."

"Yes," replied Jehu. "And you may be sure

there would be plenty of people ready to believe it was supernatural work ; and they would become more than ever convinced of the existence and evil influence of the water-spirits."

He gathered bilberries and raspberries as he talked, reaching the inn with a handful of branches of the former, which he carefully stowed away to take home with him ; declaring that his wife had a cunningly devised way of serving them up in a dish worth a king's ransom. I was sorry when the walk was over, and the forest and the lake, the wild flowers and the luscious fruit were all left behind ; but time was passing, and if Allerheiligen was to be reached before nightfall—a consummation devoutly to be wished—there must be no further loitering on the road.

So the horses were put to, and Jehu took something for the good of the house, and was quite willing to bear my share of this burden in addition to his own. We left the young landlord flirting with two pretty girls who had just arrived, and were very much welcomed by him. He was equally dividing his favours, and evidently wondering on which of the two laughing

syrens his choice would eventually fall. Involuntarily the words occurred to me :

“ Oh, pluck the rose of love the while
Life, joy, and beauty on ye smile,
While loving ye are loved.”

Probably he had never heard of Tasso, or the Garden of Armida, or the song of the bird ; but human nature is the same through all the ages, and the thoughts that Tasso conceived in the sixteenth century, as he vainly endeavoured to study law in dreary Padua, may be equally applied in the nineteenth. So the young landlord of the inn and his two pretty companions unconsciously found.

We left them behind, happy, contented, wanting nothing more, nothing better than the pleasures of the passing hour, tasting life with a careless enjoyment only they, and such as they, can experience : not wanting too much, and so not missing their grasp of life and happiness. Thrice happy mortals. As Julia Kavanagh has remarked in one of her pastoral, reflective stories, we have all of us, if the truth were known, played our stakes on the game of life and lost ; but

these humble and contented beings, realizing only the hour and the day, judged by a different standard, have played a very simple game and suffered comparatively little loss.

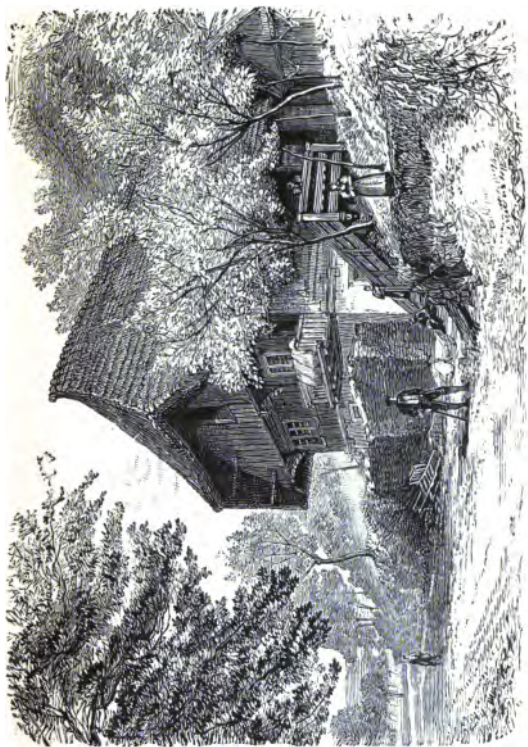
We returned the road we came (only on life's road is there no turning back), and Jehu, after his late somewhat unwonted gambols up and down the mountain, gave serious attention to his horses ; and I, like Harvey, fell into meditations which were abruptly put to flight by arriving at the inn where we had appointed to meet the carriage.

We were true to our time ; it was not. So, to pass the minutes, the young landlord escorted me to the harbour, evidently to air and exercise his English ; whilst I conscientiously praised his accent, the while I drank his coffee. He spoke good French, too, which he had learned in Paris. Then up came the tardy vehicle, and he wished me a happy journey, with a handshake that I yet feel, and shall ever remember ; whilst the fat, very fat Pater—evidently the real lord and master of the establishment—looked on with pride at his son and successor. We turned our

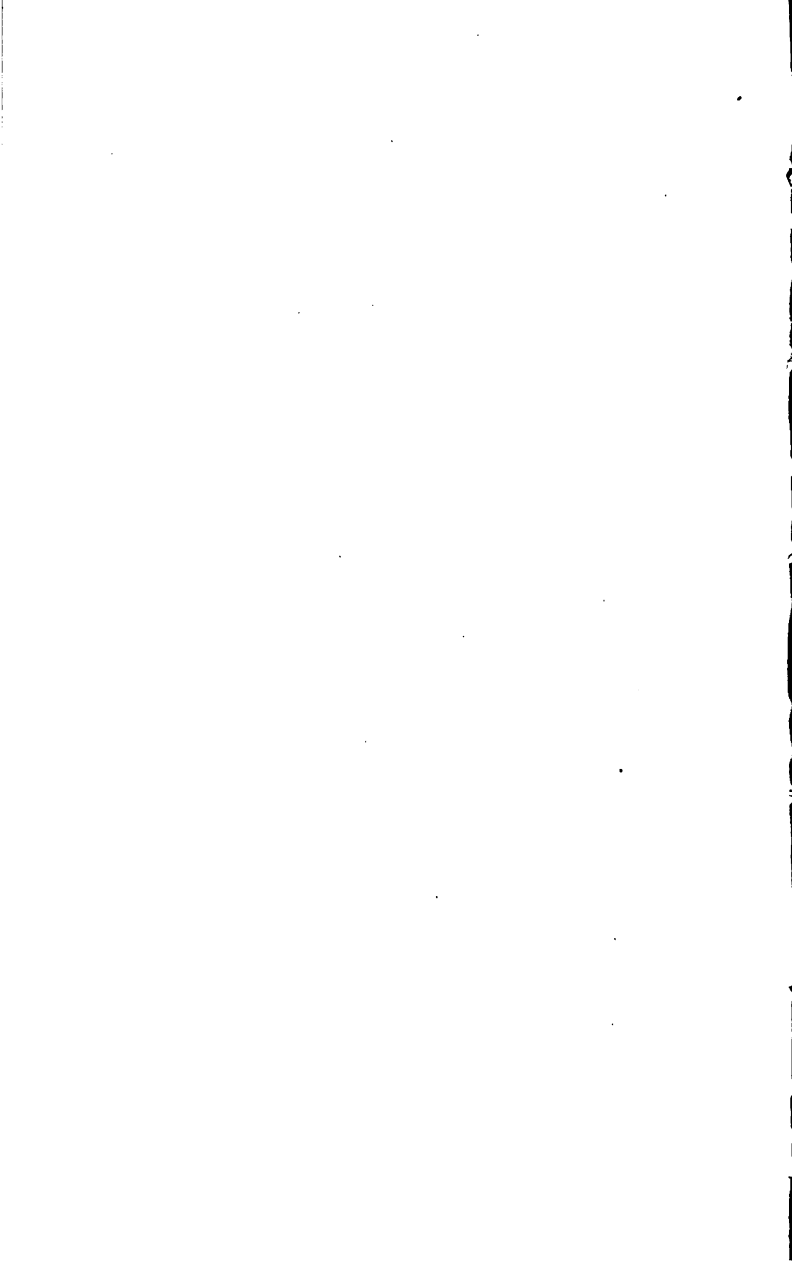
backs upon all this, and went our way towards Allerheiligen.

And speaking of handshakes, *par parenthèse*, how much there is in the action ; how different in varying individuals ; how warmed and chilled, attracted or repelled, you may be by a handshake. A whole chapter might be written upon the subject, full of subtle analysis and sage deductions ; full of signs and tokens, and rules for application. I remember once reading a paper "On Street Door Knocks," pretending to read people's characters by their way of knocking. This seemed an uncertain test, and I wondered at the time what fine shades of distinction the writer would bring into single knocks or the postman's knock. But a handshake bears its own peculiar testimony to a man's character, just as much as the expression of the eyes or the mouth, or the tone of the voice.

We went our way towards Allerheiligen—a very glorious way, full of beauty and grandeur. The day was on the wane, and the afternoon shadows were lengthening. The coachman, full of contrition for having shirked the Murgthal ;



ON THE ROAD TO ALLERHEILIGEN.



or, to put it in his own words, "for not having known that I cared about seeing the valley"—for I had had it out with him very seriously with the landlord at Achern, who made common cause with me against the practice—pointed out every spot of interest, posted me up in the name of every village, and gave me the history of every wayside house.

The backward views were magnificent, as we wound upwards into the forests. Far off mountains stretched away one behind another, and valleys, plains, and villages lay sleeping below. But the trees soon overshadowed us and shut it all out, and the breeze stirred the pines with a sad melancholy sound. Great shadows, cast by the declining sun, stretched across our path. Much of the time we might have been winding up grand, well-kept avenues belonging to some ancient estate. To our right a narrow, shallow, babbling stream frothed angrily over huge stones, running on for ever and for ever. Nature seems to mock man with its apparent immutability—vain man, dressed with so brief an authority, playing out his seven ages and disappearing as a tale

that is told, whilst the monarch of the forest is yet in his infancy.

Far up the slopes through the trees we had lovely glimpses ; could trace the long shadows, and revel in a wealth of wild verdure—bracken, ferns, and flowers. Now and then we passed a roadside inn, landmarks evidently known to the coachman, at which he cast long, lingering looks. Things were quiet this evening ; doors were closed ; nothing was in disorder. For all that could be seen stirring, the inns might have been deserted—probably were so, for the road was unfrequented and customers were few, especially on a Sunday evening. The inn-people were no doubt taking holiday, assembling at each other's houses, and making merry. The whole road was desolate and deserted ; there was nothing but the trees and the shadows to bear us company ; no sound to disturb the stillness but the running stream and the horses' feet as they beat the hard road, sending echoes up the slopes to play hide and seek amongst the trees. But this solitude has its charm.

Finally we reached the summit, and then

began rapidly to descend into the valley by steep winding paths. Twilight was now falling. Great pine mountains on all sides stretched far above us, looking, in the gathering gloom, black as Erebus. We were descending, as it seemed, into the depths of the earth ; gloom and desolation encompassed us. The air felt damp and cold : a mist was wreathing about some of the higher trees ; yet the whole picture was inconceivably wild, grand and beautiful—for this descent into Allerheiligen, the situation of the place, the surrounding scene, is one of the finest things in the Black Forest.

At length the little settlement : a group of modern buildings side by side with an old ruin, mixing up together past and present in strange incongruous fashion. Nothing more lonely and desolate could be conceived than the situation of Allerheiligen (" All Saints " by interpretation). Here, in one day, had the usual order of things been reversed ; for whilst a lake is not generally found on the top of a mountain, and a monastery frequently buries itself far up some lonely height, the Mummelsee had been discovered only after

hard climbing, and the monks of Allerheiligen had sheltered themselves in the depths of the earth. But, to do the old monks justice, they were as secluded, as retired from the world here, as they would have been perched upon some Alpine peak, whilst the situation was infinitely more depressing.

The monastery is said to have been founded in 1190 by the widow of the Count of Altdorf, brother of the Duke of Bavaria. After a wedded life of great unhappiness she bethought herself of founding a monastery, and the site was to be determined by an ass laden with bags of gold. Where the gold first touched the ground, there the monastery should be erected.

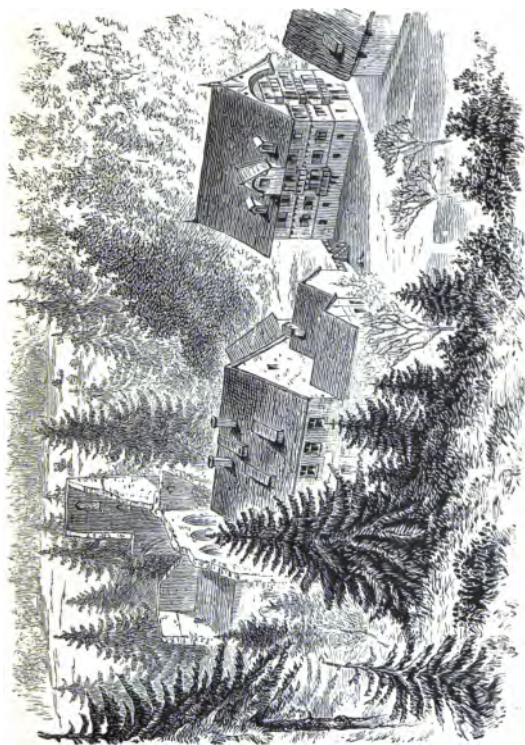
In this lovely and secluded spot the abbey rose. First, a small building; then, as it increased in wealth and strength, it extended to larger and yet larger dimensions. For centuries it was rich, famous, and sought after by those unhappy men who had found the world too much for them, and were thankful to bury themselves in a living tomb—the dead alive, one might say,—or by those novices who had not yet tried

the world, and through mistaken zeal and fervour—the lofty aspiration and ideal which so often accompany youth, alas ! so seldom outlive that period—hoped to find their dreams realized in the daily round of monotonous duties, the exercise of a narrow and narrowing creed—and hoped in vain.

But—to pause one moment—why should these aspirations and ideals so rarely outlive the period of youth and romance ? It is true, we seldom find our dreams realized in this world. Nay, the world does its best to disillusion and destroy what it cannot comprehend. As continual dropping wears away a stone, so contact with the world proves too much for most men who set out on the road of life with aims and hopes that world calls utopian, chimerical. Nevertheless, no matter how our dreams and ideals perish, as perish they will, it is well for man, come what may, to keep before him a standard which he feels sure exists, however seldom it is discovered. And he who has found even his one hero may be thankful, and go on his way rejoicing. It is not given to all men to see the longing of their souls satisfied.

For many centuries the monastery flourished. Then there came a time when monasteries were abolished ; and finally, in 1803, the Abbey of Allerheiligen was struck by lightning and destroyed. It now remains a picturesque but not extensive ruin ; a monument of departed glory ; a wreck of wrecks—type of the lives it once sheltered.

It lies in a deep, narrow hollow or ravine. Closely, abruptly surrounding it rise the lone hills clad to their summits with sombre pines. A spot more dreary and desolate need not be, in spite of its grandeur and beauty. To live a month, even a week in that place, would be to go hopelessly melancholy. With it all there was a feeling of unrest and disquiet. The stream rushes down and for ever rushes, filling all the air with its ceaseless murmur. No matter that the murmur does not rise to a roar, it is always there, day and night, summer and winter, in season and out of season. This, and the closely surrounding hills press down upon and seem to suffocate you ; a weird sensation takes possession of you ; some invisible influence in



the air is working its spells ; there is enchantment going on ; the spirits of the dead-and-gone monks are about. Who or what is to exorcise them ? I could not describe the effect Allerheiligen had upon me.

The coachman cracked his whip in true German style as we swept into the courtyard—if the open space may be dignified by the term ; the landlord came out with empressement as the carriage drew up with a flourish. Mine host had a keen eye to business, and was glad to welcome an addition to his list of visitors. Next I was piloted across the road to the other portion of the settlement, and given a room which looked on to the pine slopes, where the stream beat its ceaseless babble upon the brain.

Before daylight quite faded I went down to look at the waterfall which makes Allerheiligen famous, and of which much is said. I soon found that, far down as the ruin and settlement seemed, there was a yet lower depth beyond. The valley narrowed into a cleft as I walked, and seemed about to close in. Soon an extra rush and roar told me I was approaching the

cataract, and in a few moments I stood above a zig-zag waterfall that fell in numerous and picturesque cascades over a bed of rocks. Had the volume of water been greater, so in proportion would have been the effect ; but it was just now even smaller than usual. Very pretty, but not by any means sublime.

The situation of the fall is wild and romantic in the extreme, and the rocky heights on either side seem to guard it with angry jealousy. Zig-zag ladders conduct you to the bottom, and sundry rustic bridges span the chasm. The cataract finally empties itself in a small basin, and then flows onward less turbulently on its course to the sea—if, indeed, it does not yield up its life into some other cataract or more majestic river.

To-night its effect was mournful and desolate. In the growing darkness, the surrounding solitude and gloom seemed portentous. The deep blackness of the pines was losing itself in the deeper blackness of night, but one felt that the melancholy trees were there, and their influence remained. The very rocks took weird shapes

and forms ; and, extending my walk for some short distance beyond the waterfall, a huge roadside stone so caught the outline of a crouching bear that for one moment I stood rooted to the spot in unpleasant doubt.

But if at any period of the world's history it had been endowed with life, all that had long since been petrified, perhaps by one of the good spirits haunting this region. The stone is still there, reader, beside the steep slope, under the shadow of the trees, guarding the way. It may probably see out this century and the next in its present position, and you may satisfy yourself as to the resemblance as you pass that way.

But it must be when the very last shades of twilight are expiring—as they were expiring on this occasion—or the charm will be broken, the spell will not work, the weird influence upon the mind will be wanting. For similar effects you must have similar causes ; and if a fair landscape is described to you, all balmy air, and golden sunshine, and tropical flowers, and singing birds, and you visit that fair landscape in mid-winter, and find it all snow and east winds and leaden

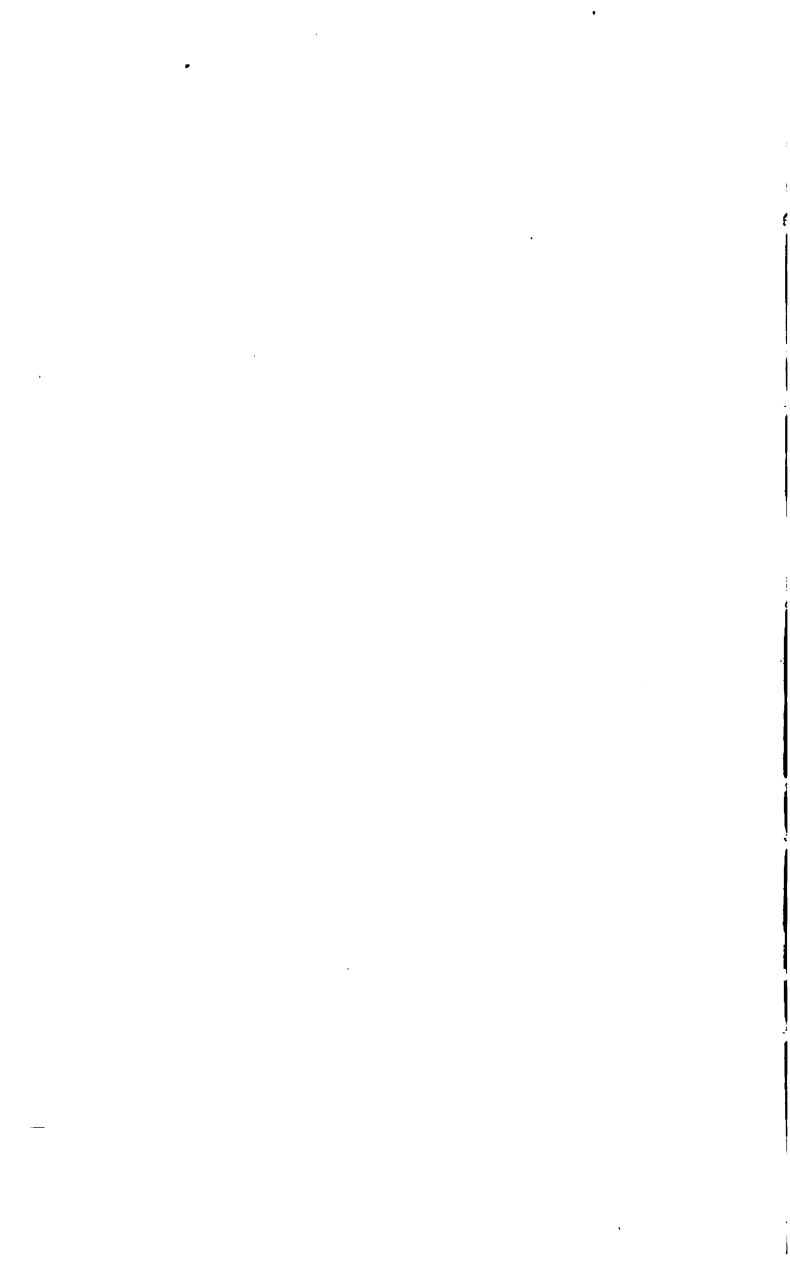
skies, do not therefore conclude that the former state of things never existed and will never return. The occasion, and not the writer, must be credited with the change.

For, poor frail mortals that we are, we cannot control our sunshine ; cannot command a day or an hour, or be certain of a moment ; cannot turn one hair white or black, or add one cubit to our stature. We have to take all things as we find them ; be thankful for our small mercies as well as our great ; hope for the best ; hope on, hope ever ; hold on our little way ; and trust that at the end of the long line of life there is a goal where all will be well ; the wrong become right, the crooked be made straight : a sunshine eternal, without fear of any cloud or stormy weather.

Groping up the zig-zag ladder as best the darkness allowed, I wended my way back to the settlement (I know no better name for it), whose lights, shining through the gloom, were the only beacon wherewith to guide one's steps. There, in a room that had once been the refectory of the monks, or something of the kind (for this portion of the abbey has been adapted to modern



ALLERHEILIGEN.



purposes), supper was not only ready but nearly over. At least thirty people were seated at a long table, busy with their knives and forks—the knives especially. I had thought to be alone in this out-of-the-world spot, and behold a crowd. As usual where a number of Germans are assembled, conversation waxed animated and voices loud. The German women know little of that excellent thing in their sex, a sweet voice, and to a shrill treble the men chime in with a firm double bass. Singular that so musical a people should neglect a charm so highly prized.

What spirits were abroad that night, hovering in the air, whispering in the rustling of the pines, the ceaseless murmur of the waterfall? Sleep brought no unconsciousness, no rest; it was haunted by dreams in which ghouls and goblins played a part, bears and wolves and winged reptiles sprang out from the depths of the forest, and it was a perpetual dance of death, as it were, to escape with life. All night long, even in sleep, the rush of the water never ceased; and when morning dawned upon another

day I felt that I had verily and indeed been possessed by the unseen powers of the air. The spirits of the monks were undoubtedly at work. Perhaps those who had shirked their dull, dry routine of duties in life were performing penance. Never was there so uncanny a spot, never a place so thoroughly given up to witchcraft. And—strange, corroborative fact—later on, in comparing notes with fellow pilgrims, I found they had had identically the same experiences, were haunted by the same terrible dreams, went through the same terrific combats.

Yes, there was something mysterious and unearthly about Allerheiligen. Whether the inn had been built on consecrated ground, and the ghosts of the friars resented the desecration; whether it displeased them that a spot devoted to religious purposes for so many centuries should now be given up to the vulgar and secular uses of public entertainment; whether, in this out-of-the-world spot, sundry murders had been committed, and the victims, in unquiet resting-places, were hovering about the world they had quitted too soon and tormenting man-

kind: this cannot be known. Certain it is, that I felt as if a month had passed away, battles and sieges and the crack of a hundred dooms had taken place, since the previous evening.

In the early morning I went for a long look at the ruins, so singular a sight in this remote quarter. There rose the crumbling walls that once had echoed with the mournful, monotonous Gregorian chants of the monks; there at the midnight mass in days gone by, the lighted windows must have gleamed weirdly amidst the impenetrable outside darkness; whilst within, those members of a most austere order performed their duties, some possibly nodding wearily, and doing penance next day for the weakness of the flesh. Here, in those grass-grown courts, age after age, century after century, the long, cold, gloomy corridors must have echoed to the footsteps of the brethren, as they crept along in cowl and sandal, and, perhaps, like the monks of La Trappe, raised their eyes to each other's faces only to give additional force to the mournful "*Memento mori*" of that ascetic order. All trace of the corridors had

disappeared ; the very ruin of much that had existed could no longer be seen ; the monks and their order had passed into the land of shadows ; but all surrounding nature, the running stream, the eternal, pine-clad hills remained the same. These change not.

I returned and found that every one breakfasted in a sort of covered shed or open room attached to the main building. The morning was fresh and chilly ; the ladies wore their bonnets, the gentlemen their hats. There was great bowing and scraping amongst them ; endless ceremonies and inquiries as to how every one had slept. All looked as if breakfast indoors in a sensible room with closed windows would have been much more agreeable than this *al fresco* entertainment : for the sun had not penetrated into the hollow ; the gloom of the hills alone was enough to freeze one at this early hour ; the rushing water, in fancy at any rate, chilled all the air. But the coffee, and the delicious honey that you find all over the Black Forest, and the hard-boiled eggs served out to every one, a little modified this state of things, and

put something of life and animation into the assembled groups.

Punctually at nine o'clock Jehu came round with the carriage. He, at any rate, looked neither goblin-haunted nor in any other way disturbed. The landlord closed the door, with a flourish ; wished me a happy journey ; made a deep obeisance as he begged the favour of a good recommendation. The coachman cracked his whip ; the loiterers in the breakfast-room looked after the carriage, and—I hoped—speeded the parting guest. We left the ruins and the inn, the people and the waterfall, and all the rest of it behind us, and went on our way rejoicing.

CHAPTER III.

KNIEBIS BATHS — GRIESBACH — SAW-MILLS — RIPPOLDSAU —
MOONLIGHT RAMBLES—A MELANCHOLY BAND—A SENTI-
MENTAL POLICEMAN—HORNBERG—TRIBERG.

WE left Allerheiligen in the early morning. The summits of the trees were gilded with a celestial light, that threw the lower portions of the valley into yet deeper shadow. The good people in the breakfast-room, in all stages of déshabille, and doing their best to appear comfortable after their breakfast of hard-boiled eggs and bitter coffee, looked after the receding equipage until a turn of the road took it from sight. We wound upwards into the splendid forest gloom, with its intense solitude. Many shades of green refreshed the eye from the springing shrubs and bracken, the trees alone faithful to their own sad tone. Presently,

sweeping down again, we crossed a bridge at the foot of the zigzag fall formed by the waters of the Grindenbach, and rejoicing in the name of the "Seven Cauldrons." The narrow cleft through which it rushes was the effect of an earthquake at some period of the earth's history more or less uncertain; but the fine effect remains, and the uncertainty is of little consequence. Certainly so wild, distorted a fissure and mass of rocks could scarcely have been the result of anything less than a grand convulsion of nature. Finally we passed from the precincts of Allerheiligen, and, like a ship clear of her anchor, felt ourselves fairly under way.

For a time that way led through a wild, narrow valley. On either side nothing seen but a wealth of pine-covered hills; nothing heard but the murmur of a stream, and the soft rustling of the wind in the waving trees. The long surface of the trees, covering the hills and spreading upwards and outwards, seen every now and again for a moment in a narrow opening of the road, was gilded by a flashing, flickering light straight from celestial regions. The sad green

blended with the pure blue of the far-off sky, so high, so ethereal in this rarefied pine-scented air. The glowing sun, by kissing the swaying branches, did his utmost to turn their melancholy into laughter. But, journeying in broad daylight, this melancholy casts no gloom upon the mind of the traveller. Rather it sheds forth a repose grateful to the eye, restoring to the nerves, refreshing to the spirit. Soon you grow to love the pines, "with a mute affection;" to miss them where they are not. A day or two's sojourn in a Black Forest town, brings back the longing for the wild freedom of the woods, their unrestrained influences, their long, lovely vistas, chequered by deep lights and shadows; above all, their grand, restful solitudes—the latter a feature that should be made conspicuous by reiteration, for it is one of the great charms and virtues of this little portion of the continent.

To all wanting change of scene, tired with town life—a life wearying from its superabundance—the Black Forest offers healing influences of a sure kind. Especially it commends itself to the pedestrian. With a companion, rather

than alone, to break the monotony of silence, and to share his impressions, he may throw himself into the shady depths during the scorching mid-day hour, and while away the time in a thousand dreams and fancies. In such gratefully cool retreat he will revel in the pine scents, the pure air, the deep silence, the flashes of blue sky that open and close as the trees above him sway and rustle in the wind. All the while his delicious rest and reveries are undisturbed, unbroken, unmolested by intrusion. Health is taken in with every passing hour ; troubles (where is the happy man without them?) fall off and are forgotten, and for the time being cease to be ; he enters into the purest happiness, of a selfish kind, that exists.

We passed through a narrow, wooded valley for a considerable distance, until, at Oppenau, the hills opened out and became more fertile. This morning it was a smiling, sunny valley, all lights and shades. Oppenau seemed a thriving little town, and like some others in the Forest, was destroyed by the French in the seventeenth century. We clattered noisily through the long

street, bordered by white houses, with their gabled roofs and green shutters—a noise that never fails to bring the good folk with haste to their doors, and expressions of wonder, speculation, or calculation may be traced on the various faces that peer forth inquisitively. Curiosity is not confined to one particular people or country, but seems indigenous to the feminine element of all nations.

We did not stay to gratify any curiosity beyond what could be gathered from a passing gaze, but hurried on towards Petersthal. Here we are in the region of the “Kniebis Baths,” a colony of watering-places very much frequented, and fashionable in their way during the summer season. People come to drink the waters—a mixture of iron and carbonic acid gas, not particularly agreeable to the taste. But what will not man go through to recover from real or imaginary ills? The hypochondriac, indeed, with his ailments that exist only in a morbid fancy, is most of all to be pitied, for *his* ills are beyond remedy. “You cannot minister to a mind diseased.”

The watering-places, five in number, are Freiersbach, Petersthal, Griesbach, Antogast, and Rippoldsau. Petersthal is one of the few places where women still go about in the costumes of the country: wonderful head-dresses, something like inflated Alsatian bows; angels with wings, but wings, from their position, more suggestive of horns—ornaments not usually worn by angels of light. Some of these costumes in distant parts of Europe—not that the Black Forest is distant, but where the railway has not penetrated, it is so for all practical purposes—unsophisticated and primitive—some of these costumes, I say, in far-away places, are as heathenish as the tattooing and painting that savages delight in, outside and beyond all sense and beauty.

The road now gradually ascended, and we journeyed in all the glory of the mid-day sun. Higher and higher yet we went, more and still more beautiful grew the view. We entered into a pure, light atmosphere which influenced the spirits like a deep draught of sparkling wine. The valley widened and expanded, the eye

roamed with delight over vast stretches of wooded slopes.

So we reached Griesbach, where, said the coachman, he must needs halt a couple of hours for the sake of the cattle. This was no ill news. Our time was our own, and night fell tardily. The spot was of extreme interest, and for hours of waiting he might have substituted days. It was surprising to see here so large and imposing an hotel, and to be told by the landlord that in the season it was far too small to accommodate the crowds of invalids, malades imaginaires, etc., who flock to Griesbach for the waters. To-day it was nearly the end of their somewhat short season, and comparatively few people were remaining ; the others, like swallows in autumn, had taken flight. But the sensible swallows go to warmer climes ; many of the Griesbach visitors, under compulsion, migrate towards the cardinal point, homewards.

Yet somewhat more than a mere handful of visitors still lingered. Table-d'hôte was over, and before the hotel, in the open air, beside the little running stream, ladies were drinking

coffee, laughing and flirting with the opposite sex, supremely idle and supremely happy. You saw directly at least one of the reasons why Griesbach is popular and frequented. A pavilion contained billiard-tables, and the balls were being knocked about with a will that suggested nothing of the invalid, or else that the waters had done good service. The ladies were dressed in the height of fashion—even here: and English, French, and German might be heard around.

Flirtation is a dangerous pastime, and matches, said the landlord, were continually being formed in Griesbach. The assertion was not to be doubted; but the course of true love did not always run smoothly. Sometimes the parents objected on one side or the other, and the consequences, as the children say in their game, “were fatal.” Tears, entreaties, rage, anger, domestic storms, packing up and flight, occasionally diversified the even tenour of the Griesbach social atmosphere. But in these days distance is only comparative; it may be overcome more easily than the opposition of an

inhuman parent; and though flight may for a time interrupt the course of love, it is only gaining, by a temporary lull, fresh strength for victory.

The hotel looked comfortable and well-appointed. Light, airy rooms, all white paint and gilding, and cheerful tones were not without their influence upon minds in the seventh heaven of matrimonial arrangements or given up to the pleasures of melancholy. The dining-room was large, long, and capable of seating a great crowd. One trembled at thought of the noise that must often echo within those four walls. Below, a large hall contained the well, a square enclosure, like a small swimming-bath, where an attendant handed up at the end of a long pole a glass of the sparkling but noxious liquid, which seem principally to combine the flavours of ink and bad eggs.

But, apart from the waters, Griesbach must be a pleasant resting-place. Yet the hotel, surrounded by hills (for though we had ascended from Petersthal, in some mysterious way we never seemed to get nearer the tops of the

mountains), suggested that in summer it must be oppressive. The landlord, however, said it was not so. In the hottest weather they had a breeze, whilst shade might always be found round about ; cool avenues with overarching trees, under the hillside, where you might sit or lounge all day long, and listen to the rushing water, and read a favourite book, and inhale the scent of the pines, and live in a world of your own creating. Again, they were so far above the sea level that the air was always light and sparkling, never depressing. All who came to Griesbach departed the better for their visit ; and people return to it year after year—as we go back to our first loves, when, attracted to others by the fickleness of human nature, we have proved them and found them wanting. Certainly, as far as could be seen, everything was done at the hotel to make a visit agreeable as well as health-restoring.

From the slopes behind the hotel magnificent views spread their store. The hills fell back in wooded ranges and cultivated fields, where women worked in the blazing sun : picturesque

dots in the landscape, arrayed in white caps, blue petticoats, and pink handkerchiefs crossed over the shoulders. Far up the opposite range the merry ring of the woodman's axe—always a pleasant sound—might be heard, and the voice of the running stream never ceased its murmur. The broad, white, winding road looked hot and sleepy in the sunshine. It is astonishing how excellent these roads are, throughout the whole district of the Black Forest.

The woods were much thinner here than in many other parts. The landlord—my present oracle—said it was because the timber trade flourished in Griesbach. In some districts the trees cut down have to be replaced with young ones; so that the woods are ever green, ever growing. Here it was not so; and the cleared portions have consequently been turned into fields and vineyards. "Ill blows the wind that profits nobody," says Shakespeare; and these fields and vineyards gave work to men and women who might otherwise find it a hard task to gain a livelihood.

Mine host seemed enterprising ; one of those energetic temperaments—not quite universal in these days—who do not let the grass grow under their feet. In winter, when Griesbach is deserted, and the waters cease to allure, and the hotel is closed, he turns his thoughts to the timber trade. The busy bee gathers most honey ; and mine host of Griesbach no doubt finds that landlords, unlike cobblers, are not the better for sticking to their last. Two heads are better than one—why not two trades ? But whatever he may find, he was so kind and attentive, escorting me about the slopes, showing me all the small lions of the place, devoting his time when I could see that he had work on hand, and doing it all so readily, that I felt it would be a pleasure some day to become the guest of this good host for a whole week.

In the valley a large saw-mill was at work—also belonging to the landlord. An old-fashioned, picturesque water-wheel creaked and groaned and strained its brown old timbers, slowly turned by the stream, moving the machinery within that cut up the trees into

planks. The flying sawdust as usual scattered abroad the delicious perfume of the pine. As almost without exception in the Black Forest, the men did their best to welcome an intruder, and show him what little there might be to examine. The somewhat rough machinery did its work sufficiently well; but it was the atmosphere of the place that caused one to linger and the pleasant swish of the saw as it divided the wood. These mills are great institutions in the Black Forest; as I have already said, it is pleasant to visit them, they are so busy and clean and primitive; the men greet you so civilly; and neither time nor distance obliterates the remembrance of the perfume-laden air.

It was almost my last impression of Griesbach. Soon after, we were once more travelling on the white winding road. And now occasionally we seemed to get more on a level with the tops of the mountains, looked down upon vast pine forests, a deep smiling valley with its onward rushing stream; occasional villages—few and far between, like angels' visits to the earth; more

saw-mills; farm houses dotted about, that are more picturesque than almost any houses you can see elsewhere. Roadside cottages, like mile-stones, marked the way; evidences, amidst all this extent of hill and valley and forestland, that even here the short and simple annals of human lives were being played out for weal ~~or~~ for woe.

Amidst a repetition of such scenes—for in the Black Forest you must expect something of sameness, though without monotony—we journeyed through the afternoon. The horses, after their long mid-day rest, travelled with a determination to prove their gratitude and do their best. Towards evening we reached Rippoldsau, and with it the end of our second day's journey.

If the extent of the hotel at Griesbach was surprising, still more so was that at Rippoldsau. It appeared capable of unlimited resources and endless expansion. And here the season still seemed in full flow. The place was thronged with visitors, full of bustle and excitement, the ordinary life and occupations of such times

and places. People were running to and fro ; every one was doing something with a will, if only idly lounging and smoking in a chair. The long dining-room at night was crowded with people at supper ; many others were taking it *al fresco*. When I first arrived, little groups and parties were seated in the open space before the hotel at small round tables. Ladies were chatting and working ; gentlemen chatting and smoking and drinking mild beer ; children "disporting" themselves, and making every one thoroughly uncomfortable and misanthropic, except their fond and foolish parents.

Having heard much of the restoring properties of the baths it seemed the right thing to test their virtues after a long day's journey. A manservant acted as pilot through endless passages. At length, when I began to wonder whether these subterranean mazes would lead to an intermediate world, I was duly consigned (like a bale of merchandize) to the tender mercies of a bath-woman. Seizing a long bit of wood, she turned on the water, and began splashing about, the verisimilitude of another Fury ; and like a witch

in Macbeth, stirred up the cauldron with her stick. "Fair is foul, and foul is fair," I expected to hear her mutter in hollow tones, and looked to see if some grimalkin with fiery eyes and arched back kept guard upon her shoulder.

Not at all. She seemed a peaceful woman enough ; it was only her way. Just as these better thoughts in her favour were arising, a shrill cry without announced, with as much noise as those terrible trumpeters in "Lohengrin" heralding the break of day, that "THE COUNTESS WAS COMING!"

Immediately all was excitement and confusion. The bath-woman turned pale, dropped her witch's stick, deserted her post, rushed out to greet THE COUNTESS. I followed, and beheld a German giantess in full sail, accompanied by a maid carrying a huge bag. As a truthful historian, I am bound to record that she was ugly ; and I may do so without being personal, as I afterwards found that there were no less than sixteen German countesses at Rippoldsau, who all took baths and drank the waters. No other adjective will describe this lady's charms ;

possibly she was amiable: whilst some of the other countesses (a few of them were lovely) probably had vixenish tempers. Nature ever has her compensations. The bath-woman backed and bobbed before this countess just as one does before royalty; and the giantess swept into her bath-room as if the world had been made for her, and for her alone. It was some time before order and serenity of mind reigned once more, and anything beneath a countess received attention to its humble requirements.

Rippoldsau is evidently more lively and frequented than Griesbach; there is a little more going on, and it seems more popular. It is two thousand feet above the level of the sea, and rejoices in a pure, bright air. The somewhat narrow valley is surrounded by densely wooded heights. Yet after the lonely roads and forest solitudes that you have traversed and loved for days, to come suddenly upon this lively settlement and crowd of visitors, at the first moment oppresses one with a sense of suffocation and a restraint irksome and annoying.

Rest, repose, and seclusion have vanished for

a time. All this might be the life and activity and daily round of a fashionable watering-place ; it seems out of character with the Black Forest, and is resented accordingly. In the open space enclosing the three sides of the great white building, you at once note the crowd idly sitting, chatting, laughing, in full enjoyment of "le grand air." Visitors form themselves into groups and coteries ; social merriment reigns. Music is in force at night, and sometimes dancing. Sentimental couples pace the avenues, and under cover of the darkness make love and eternal vows. If there is a moon, they gaze at it in concert.

"In full-orbed glory, yonder moon divine
Rolls through the dark-blue depths."

So wrote Southey ; and this and much more, concealed to ordinary eyes, lovers apparently discover in the attractions of the Queen of Night. Their paradise is very sweet while it lasts ; and awakening to realities is, after all, good discipline.

The most imposing personage (after the countess) was the policeman—extremes often meet ; so grand in gold braid, so gentlemanly

in appearance, it was puzzling to mark his rank. As night advanced, I found myself walking his beat, and joined him in the shady avenue, under the stars. He gave me all his history, private and public, domestic and official. It is good to get at the lives of those you thus casually meet ; to learn their joys and sorrows ; for a moment hold out to them the hand of sympathy or encouragement, condolence or congratulation—whatever may be the special need of the occasion. None can tell what fruit it may bear ; how a few words in the right place may chance to turn upwards the scale in a life that was going down. Sympathy is so hard to find ; at the best it is administered with so little delicacy ; and it is just those that need it who can ill stand the rough handling of the world. If exercising the fellow-feeling that makes us wondrous kind does nothing more, at least it keeps one's sympathies alive, one's heart green. And in that day when for us the silver cord is loosed, and the pitcher has taken its last journey to the fountain, we shall be none the worse for having held out to others the right hand of

fellowship. I have often dived into many histories of such people—seen for a short space, then gone for ever—and never once was made to feel that any interest awakened, any questions asked, any details entered into, were thought intrusive, but much, very much the opposite.

At Rippoldsau our policeman is there only for the season, to assist in keeping the peace that was never known to be broken. He patrols up and down, knows all, chats with all, and passes a very pleasant time. This especial guardian of the place was too refined and gentle for his office. It was impossible to realize him in the act of marching off a refractory character to solitary confinement. His time was nearly up, for the season was on the wane, and he said he should not be sorry to go. He was getting a little tired of the life; was wearying—as the Scotch quaintly put it—for his wife and bairns. Quite a glow came into his voice as he spoke of them. There were his treasures, and there was his heart.

Of course there was a band at Rippoldsau. There is a band at all these places: often a

terrible, an impossible band. This was, without exception, the most terrible and impossible band ever heard: the most melancholy. The performers all looked as miserable as their music sounded. When they began their evening dirge, just beneath my windows, as ill fortune would have it, without warning—so silently had they taken their seats—I thought the place had suddenly gone mad. Soon I felt that it was I who was going mad. Indescribable wails filled the air. For a whole hour these unearthly sounds went on; but long before that hour expired, I had fled to the mountains in self-defence and self-oblivion.

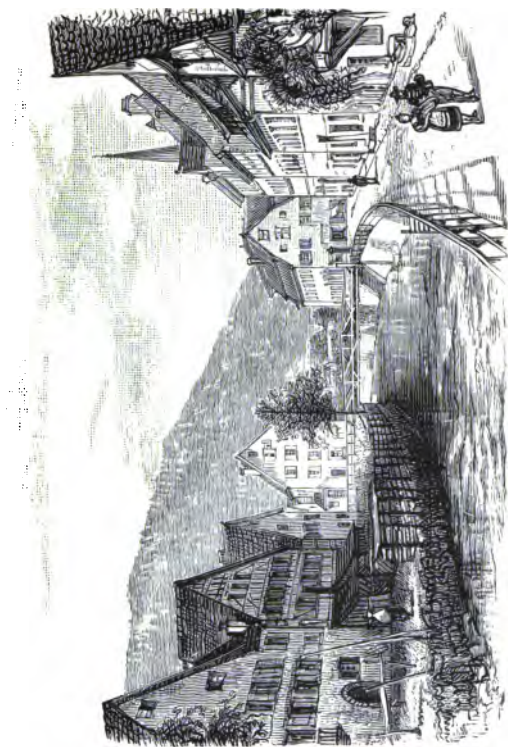
Here, too, the woodman's axe was doing its work. The lower slopes, immediately above the valley, were bare of everything but a few fruit trees. Small apple trees, whose branches grew on a level with the hillside path; tempting by reason of their looks, and because it needed only to raise the hand and pluck the fruit. Picturesque cottages dotted the slopes and the valley, and I wondered how the inmates fared in winter; for, on taking a short cut downwards,

I found myself, at every step, sinking, like Christian, into a Slough of Despond.

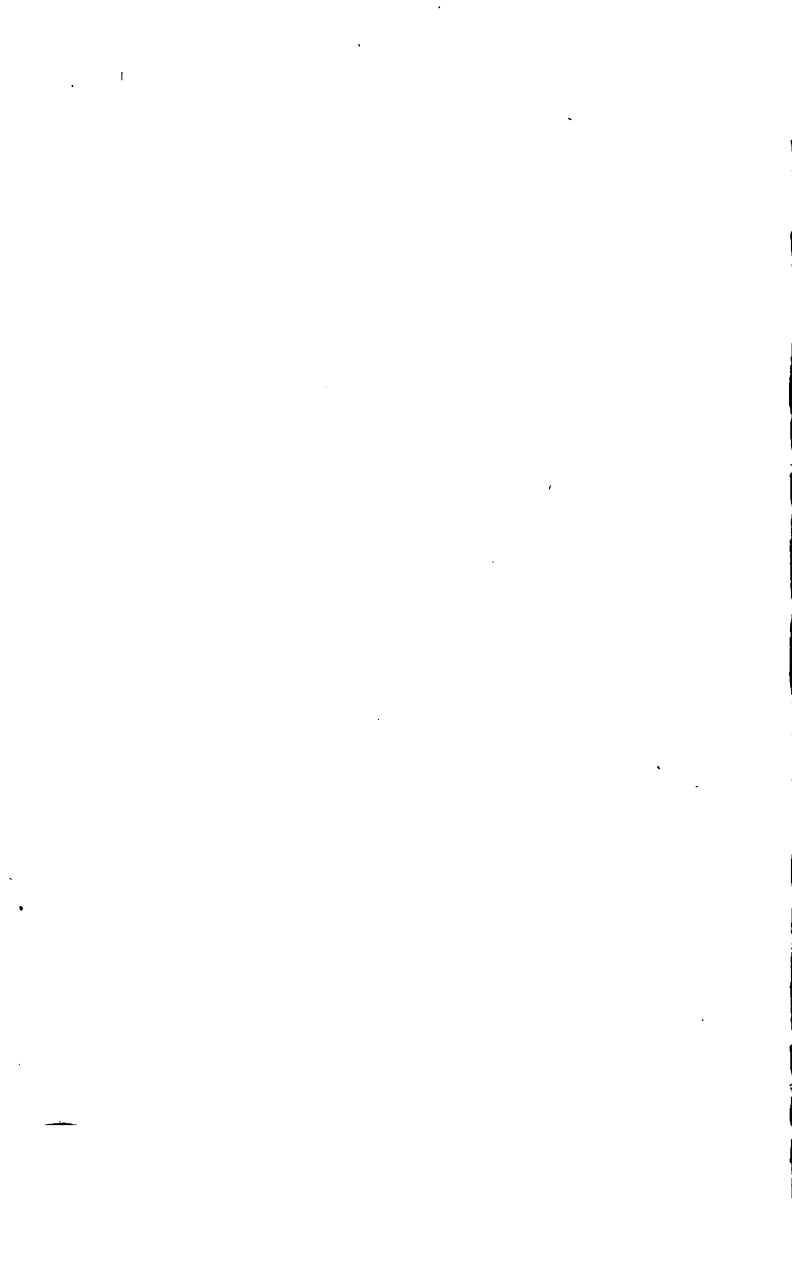
At an unearthly hour next morning, the melancholy musicians again went through their performances as though every air played was one more nail in their coffin. If they resembled the lark in no other sense, at least they imitated him in the matter of early rising. "And soaring ever singest," could not be said of them as of Shelley's songster; rather they took themselves and their hearers into unimagined depths—of misery and anguish. Suddenly a window at right angles with mine was opened, and a bass voice in distressed quavers shouted out above the wailing of the catgut, in unmistakable English: "Man wants but little here below, nor wants that little long." I hastened for a sight of the philosopher, but the oracle having spoken, had withdrawn, and the casement was closed again. The players evidently took it for a compliment—though an empty one, since it did not rain gold, or even silver—for they raised between them the ghost of a smile, and wailed on more determinedly than ever.

Early that morning we left Rippoldsau, fine weather still smiling upon the world. If there were clouds, it was merely those white fleecy visitants that add so much to the beauty of earth and sky, bringing out the deep blue of the one, throwing strong lights and shades upon the other. We wound about hill after hill of wooded pines ; or, descending to the level of the valley, ran side by side with the flowing stream. Wooded slopes were above us, before us, behind us, around us. The trees waving and murmuring as the breeze took them, made, with the ripple of the water, a harmony of sounds that seems to form a connecting link in nature—the winds and waves, the forests and laughing valleys—binding them eternally to each other.

Klösterle was soon left behind, and its church with the twin towers, built on the ruins of an old Benedictine monastery ; a small, scattered, village, where people stay to avoid the greater expense of Rippoldsau, or when its formidable rival is overflowing. Presently the valley opened out to make room for the picturesque village of Seebach, reposing snugly under the shelter



HORNBERG.



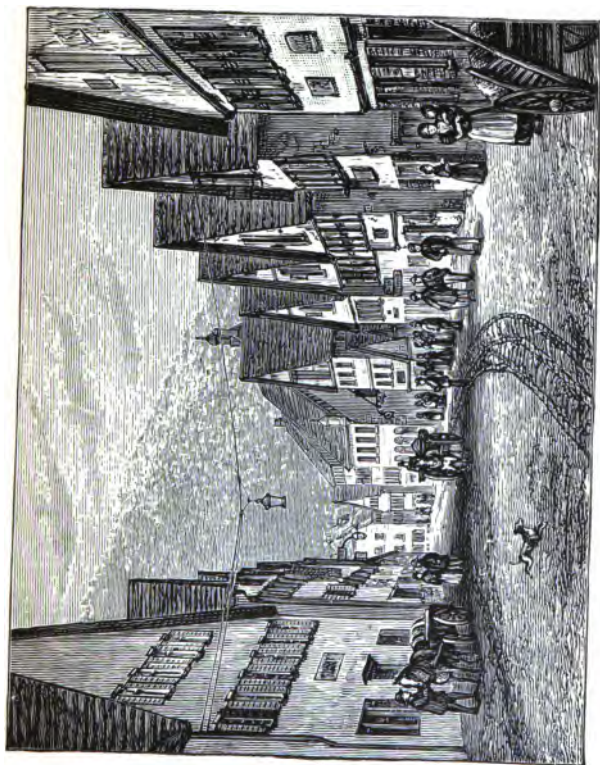
of the pine hills ; a quaint, lovely spot, its gable-pointed houses primitive and old-world in appearance, the valley rich in fruit trees and smiling fields.

Next came Shapbach, a straggling settlement where, for the most part, the ground floor of the houses is converted into stables and given up to the cows and horses, the inhabitants modestly retiring to the upper portion of their dwellings. Then Wolfach, the latter a small picturesque town celebrated for its pine-cone baths, a remedy said to be luxuriously delicious. *Toujours perdrix* is not desirable ; and so, in spite of the beauties of nature, it was pleasant to pass through these villages and towns, note their quaint houses, and watch the people at their daily work : these hewers of wood and drawers of water. The timber trade is carried on extensively in this district also ; saw-mills have their place—and trees their time for falling.

About mid-day Hornberg was reached, an old town of a certain size and importance, in situation still more favoured than either Rippoldsau or Griesbach ; far more open, reposing in a

great amphitheatre of hills, at the foot of the principal Black Forest chain. Here we stayed some hours, and amongst other interesting visits the landlord of the inn escorted me over his workshop, and showed me all the mysteries of the Black Forest carving. Men and boys were turning, chiselling, and cutting out with delicate tools and wonderful dexterity. It was curious to watch a small block of wood rapidly assume proportions under skilful hands: a shapeless piece take the form of an angel's wing, another the head of an eagle with outstretched pinions. The men, not all equally clever, seemed all equally happy and contented with their lot. If the master pointed out one more than usually gifted, he was certain to be unlike the others in a greater refinement and delicacy of look; showing that Nature bestows not with unequal hand; but, holding the scales of justice, administers therefrom her gifts.

Hornberg is very much like an overgrown village. Its principal street quaint with gabled houses, old-fashioned windows, and long rows of shutters that stare at you like sentinels. But it



HORNBERG.

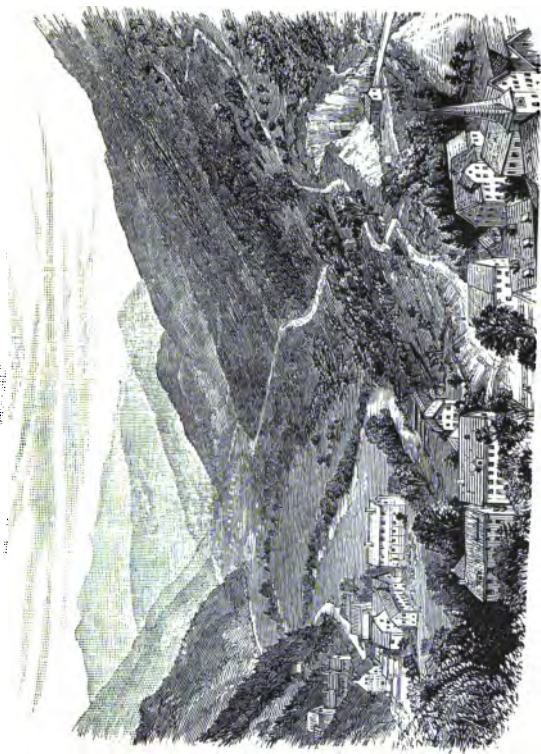
is thriving and industrious. There are factories given up to glass work and the making of common pottery or china ; tall chimneys now and then send forth clouds of black smoke, a discordant element amidst these beauties of nature. More artistic and interesting are the workshops for wood-carving, where the men lead pleasant lives in the cultivation and production of the beautiful, and may rejoice in the gift they possess. But for it, they might, like many of their brethren, pass their lives in blasting rocks and breaking stones for the roads.

A wooded height overlooking the town is crowned by the ruins of an old castle, where a princess of Wurtemberg is said to have languished out her life in exile. From one point four valleys open out ; chief among them the Gutachthal, with magnificent hills stretching upward, in broad, expansive outlines, a silvery stream running its course. At the far end the valley is bounded by another chain, dim and hazy in outline, cleaving the sky. Towards Triberg you may trace a long line of steam, almost fancy you hear the on-rushing of the

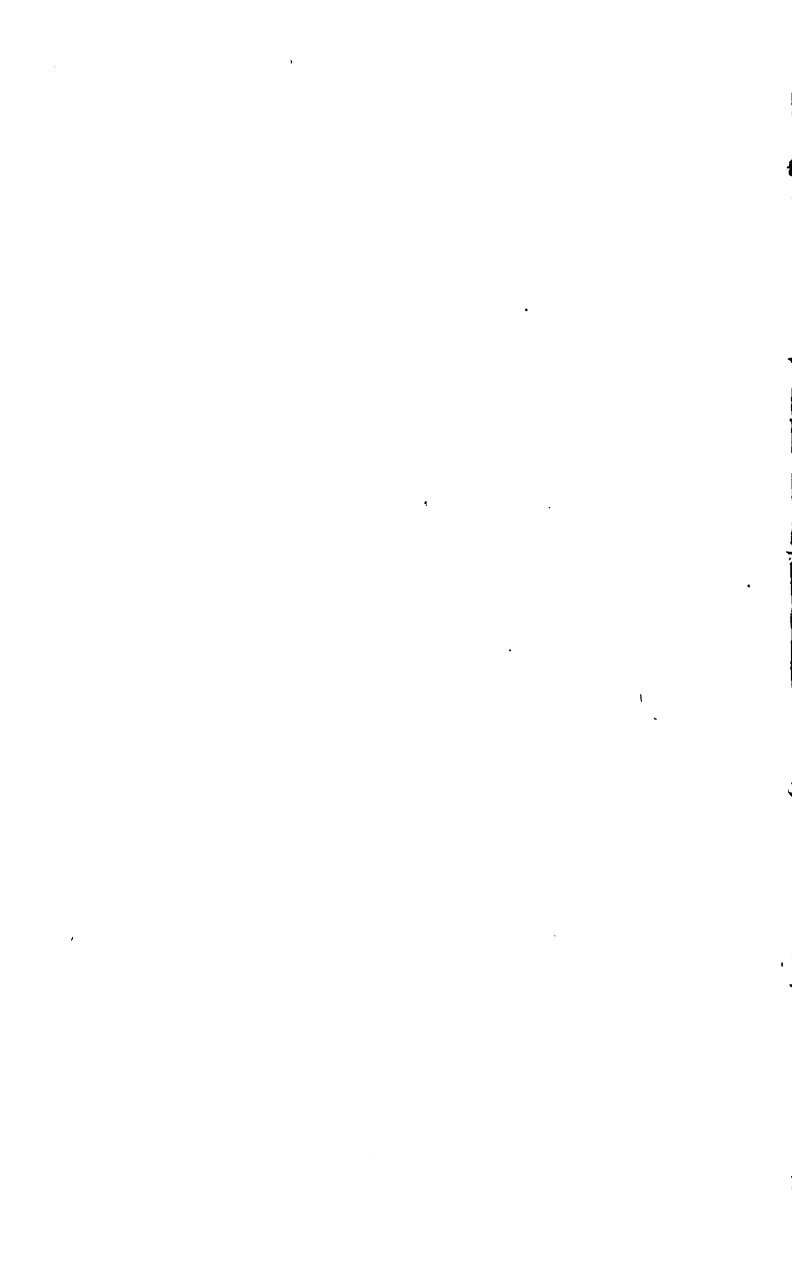
train, as, high above the level of the road, it twists and turns like a snake amongst the pine hills.

This same train reminded me that time was passing. Lovely as was the view, it was impossible to gaze upon it for ever, like the poor exiled princess. Charming landscapes take us out of ourselves and the world as soon as anything; but in the "eternal fitness of things" there is a time for abstaining even from contemplating the beauties of nature. Down the rugged pathway, and coming right into the backyards of ancient houses, whence assuredly all romance had fled, I found myself in the quaint old street. It was quiet enough. A few people were strolling, rather than hurrying, about their business; others were lounging at their doors, talking to opposite neighbours, recording, it may be, the small chronicles and excitements of their lives. But the general air and impression of the place was one of repose—as it should be in these far-away mountain nooks.

Back to the inn, where the landlord had prepared the best cup of coffee I found in all the Black Forest—a small record with which he



GUTACHTHAL.



ought to be credited. Then Jehu came round with his carriage, and, with a melancholy smile, remarked, as we started, that our last stage had commenced. It had been a particularly pleasant drive. Excepting the contretemps at the outset, all had gone merrily as a marriage bell. The coachman, perhaps as a sort of "amende honorable," a repentance bearing fruit—alas! not always the case with us—had outdone himself in civility and obliging efforts. Sunshine and blue skies had brightened our path. This is absolutely indispensable to the enjoyment of the Black Forest; no place can be more unpleasant in wet, gloomy, or cloudy weather. A melancholy falls upon nature the most cheerful temperament must yield to. Mists arise and fogs surround you; all views, near or distant, woods, outlines and undulations, are obliterated; a wind creeps down the valleys and searches you out; and probably the next halting-place will possess no warmth or fire to restore animation.

The way from Hornberg to Triberg was perhaps the most picturesque bit of the whole drive.

The Black Forest railway here twists and turns about the hills ; now close to your left hand, far above the level, and now, in a few moments, as by magic, on the opposite heights. Small farms or settlements ; here and there a small church ; fruit trees in abundance. A few country people in quaint costumes passed us on the road, and—a pleasant and general custom in the Forest—took off their hats and wished one good day in a voice that seemed to say they were at peace with all mankind, and wished to remain so.

So we reached Triberg ; and, winding round by the railway station, up between the hills, entered the long steep street of the thriving little town. Jehu was now on his own territories, his dignity at stake. He cracked his whip and dashed upwards in a way that brought all sorts of heads to all sorts of windows. The hotel was at the further end of the town. A turn to the left, a sharp, short ascent, and our journey was over.

The Schwarzwald Hotel was romantically placed. Separated from the town, it stood alone on the hill-side. Fir woods stretched upwards

behind it ; a waterfall ran its course within a few minutes' walk, almost the prettiest fall in the Black Forest. It forced its way between pine-fringed rocks ; ferns and bracken beautified the wild, rugged sides. Dashing noisily over great boulders, emptying its various cascades into seething pools, it finally escaped, and rushed through the principal streets of the town in two swiftly-flowing channels, so wide that boards or planks were placed over them before the doors of the houses, to enable the inhabitants to cross the road.

Triberg is a rallying point for visitors from all parts of the Black Forest. People make for it from Baden on the one side, from Switzerland on the other. Thus it is quite fashionable and crowded. Amongst other good turns, the repentant coachman had telegraphed for a room, and they had reserved one with a balcony and a charming outlook over the town and the waterfall, the valley and surrounding hills. But the hotel was so crowded that before ten o'clock at night, every one was turned out of the reading-room, beds were extemporized on sofas and

chairs—and one pitied those who had to occupy them. One unlucky traveller was drafted on to a balcony, where he must have kept company with the spirits of the mist, so blue and shivering did he look the next morning.

If adversity makes us acquainted with strange bed-fellows, so travelling apparently sometimes extends our experience to the eccentricities of time and place.



RIPPOLDSAU.

CHAPTER IV.

TRIBERG—GEWERBEHALLE—LAMY SÖHNE—SCHÖNACH—VIL-
LINGEN—FURTWANGEN — SIMONSTHAL — WALDKIRCH —
ST. MARGHERITA—FREIBURG.

FEW spots in the Black Forest are more romantically situated than Triberg. In the very heart of the district, it so should of right possess rare and unusual qualities. Here tourists and travellers "most do congregate," and in a double stream of people form Perpetual Motion. The Schwarzwald Hotel is in a constant state of excitement from arrivals and departures, succeeding each other in endless procession ; until at last, looking on at the constant ebb and flow one is tempted to exclaim :

" All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players :
They have their exits and their entrances."

Every one who visits the Black Forest visits Triberg, and most people make a somewhat longer stay here than at other places. For some reason or other it seems to be looked upon as a sort of haven of rest, where for a time the onward rush, the craving for fresh fields and pastures new, may be laid aside—even if it be but for twenty-four hours. A certain calmness and repose takes possession of the spirit, and one yields to it without reluctance or regret.

The scene from the Schwarzwald Hotel is enough to tempt any one to linger. The heights, towering above the building, are a mass of pines, and nothing but pines, range above range, fringing the very outlines. In a cleft or crevice, down comes the rushing torrent in seven distinct falls, emptying themselves in self-made basins, where the water froths and boils and bubbles like a demon's cauldron. Great stones and rocks, moss-grown, fern-fringed, twist and turn the water into fantastic forms and shapes. Looking upwards, on each side the chasm is wild and rugged with rocks jagged, and zig-zagged like a flash of petrified lightning, beau-



SCHWARZWALD HOTEL, TRIBERG.

tified by innumerable ferns that seek the shade and the cool, refreshing spray of the tumbling stream. Delicate pine trees complete the picture, and make the Triberg waterfall perhaps the most romantic in the Black Forest, as it is said to be the most important in Western Germany.

Below the hotel lies the town, sleeping in the valley, surrounded by cultivated slopes that stretch upwards, and distant pine hills that close in the view. The town, thriving and industrious, is given up to straw-plaiting manufactories, abounds in wood-carvers and clock-makers, is full of shops exhibiting choice specimens of handiwork. If you wish to be tempted in this way, better be tempted here than elsewhere, for in the Triberg Gewerbehalle, or exhibition, will be found the best collection in all the Black Forest. Hundreds—it almost feels like thousands—of clocks, are ticking, striking, whirring, chiming all over the place, and your head soon whirrs in sympathy (a forced sympathy in this instance) with the machinery. Whilst a cuckoo suddenly flutters out and excitedly announces with all the

power of its lungs that it is ten in the morning, a small trumpeter opposite as determinedly stalks out of his niche, blows an unearthly discord, and announces six at night. Then a dozen cuckoos all strike up at once with the effect of a chromatic scale pressed down together—and you feel that Bedlam would be better than this.

But the exhibition is worth a visit, if only to hear the great mechanical organ at the further end of the room. Amongst its selection it plays the Overture to “*Tannhäuser*,” with full band accompaniment, in a manner that quite puts to the blush the orchestra at Covent Garden. The manager politely hands you a chair; the eyes close; and under the influence of the wild, weird, magnificent composition, town, exhibitions and noisy crowds sink out of sight in obedience to a magician’s wand. Mountains and pine forests, with vast solitudes and gloomy depths take their place, and ring and re-echo with the wonderful music of “*Tannhäuser*.” Suddenly, still in obedience to the wand, imagination sees a white-robed, drooping figure clinging to a cross and a voice rises in supplication; a voice so

exquisitely pure and sweet, you know it can belong to only one singer of the present day—Albani. Then a rugged pathway opens, and you see the trembling figure toiling upwards in that last walk, at the end of which, her sacrifice complete, the world sees her no more.

Suddenly the music stops; the charm is broken; Albani's thrice-lovely voice fades in the depths of the woods; you are violently brought back to earth by the polite manager, who asks if he shall change the barrel for "Madame Angot." With horror overwhelmed you beat a retreat, and beg for no more music.

The Black Forest is famous for these mechanical organs—orchestrions, as they are called—and in some instances they are brought to great perfection. There is a shop close to the exhibition, bearing the name of Lamy Söhne, full of clocks and singing birds and orchestrions, where you may pass half an hour in a fairyland of surprises and all kinds of mechanical music. One morning I went in with an old lady and gentleman—the latter a grave dignitary of the Church of England.

"A very tiring place," said the old lady; "all up and down hill; the only fault I find with the Black Forest. Couldn't they level it, my dear?"—to her husband—"or build viaducts or something? Or at the very least, couldn't they organize pony chairs all over the country—like those, you know, that we found so useful at Bournemouth last year?"

"Take a seat, my love," said the old gentleman sympathetically, without committing himself to an opinion. And he placed one for her, whilst the young man in the shop (whose jolly, good-natured face and broad grin delighted one to behold) wound up the orchestra.

The old lady sat down somewhat heavily from sheer exhaustion, and immediately the chair struck up the lively air of "The Watch on the Rhine," with a decidedly martial influence upon its occupant. She sprang from her seat as if it had been a gridiron, and asked her husband reproachfully if he was amusing himself at her expense, and whether her age was not sufficient to secure her from practical joking.

"Dear me!" cried he, in amazement, looking

at the offending chair as though he expected it to walk away of its own accord. "What a musical nation these Black Foresters are! Why, it's music everywhere! The very chairs you sit upon are full of it."

At this moment the orchestrion struck up a selection from "Don Giovanni," and the old lady recovered her amiability in listening to a really splendid instrument. I left them still enjoying it, marvelling at all the birds and boxes, and thinking each one more wonderful than another.

The waterfall drew one upwards as the pole draws the needle. The water roared and foamed in its course, and threw around its spray in a manner almost too refreshing. On one of the rustic bridges, three German students tramping the country were enjoying the rushing water, when one of them, leaning too far over, dropped his hat into the seething pool. At this he appeared much afflicted, and for the first moment seemed inclined to jump in after it, though already swallowed up out of sight. But his companions persuaded him that as he certainly would not recover the hat, whilst he might

possibly lose his life, the chances were scarcely worth the risk. His hair was wild, his face covered with scars—a common enough occurrence with German students, who seem to take to fighting, cutting, and slashing each other as a necessary part of education. So, giving up all idea of a plunge, the three went tumbling and whistling down hill, now breaking out into a few bars of a volkslied, now making the woods re-echo with shouts of laughter, in response to a remark from one or other—more or less humorous we will suppose.

“The loud laugh that speaks the vacant mind,” as Goldsmith has it, may well have exception when three students are out for a holiday, revelling in life, youth, and health, in the beauties of nature, the glorious, waving, whispering woods, the grand, free air, the blue skies, the floods of sunshine, the perfect, unrestrained liberty of the hour ; books, enemies, duels, all thrown to the winds. Day after day wandering at their own sweet will ; rejoicing in youth and strength ; the very lightness of the purse often, in some mysterious manner, contributing to their pleasures

by making more uncertain the movements and future of each day. Laying up a store of memories for a time when such excursions will no longer be possible; when three fast friends bound by close ties, shall have widened the links and loosened the cords of friendship by the cruel force of time, chance, and change.

Ah, what a happiness it all is—these golden, glowing days—if we only knew it, what a happiness! Perhaps because so fleeting.

“There’s not a joy the world can give like that it takes away,
When the glow of early thought declines in feeling’s dull
decay;

’Tis not on youth’s smooth cheek the blush alone which fades so
fast,

But the tender bloom of heart is gone ere youth itself be past.”

Oh, let us make the most of our youth, our golden days. Make fast our friends and let them not go, revel in our strength, lose no opportunities, leave as little as possible behind for regret. Rejoice, oh young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth. . . . but, as far as possible, put away evil and sorrow from thy flesh. Take thy pleasures to the full, give thanks for opportunities and

capacities for enjoyment, so richly bestowed upon thee ; but let them be tempered by innocence and uprightness, and so shalt thou be doubly blessed : blessed at the time, and blessed in the recollection. For remember that if the ways of thine heart and the light of thine eye be not single, for all these things thou shalt be brought into judgment.

I took the place of the students on the bridge, and watched the pouring water and seething foam, until their songs and laughter discreetly died into silence as they entered the public streets. Then on I went, upwards through the wood, overshadowed by the pine trees, until at the end of a rugged climb, the path opened out upon a wide plain, an inn dedicated to the waterfall, a long, white, well-made road, the village and church-spire of Schönach in the distance.

The open space, the free air, unchecked by surrounding mountains, was pleasant after the close confinement of Triberg ; the long white road lured one insensibly onwards. The green grass and cultivated fields refreshed one by contrast with the sad forest gloom. So on and on,



WATERFALL, TRIBERG.

until at a rough, roadside bench I sat down to rest. Toiling up a steep little path, slowly came an old, old woman, wrinkled and curved ; so ancient, she might have been Methuselah's widow ; so bowed with care, she might have had, like Atlas, the weight of the world upon her shoulders. As she walked she plaited straw, and she stopped and spoke in a sort of patois German, and one had to guess at half her meaning. She said she was nearly ninety, had had a hard life, been many years a widow, and was waiting the time of her departure—it wouldn't be long now, she pathetically added.

"How do you live?" I asked, wondering whether the village made provision for its old people in the form of doles or asylums.

"By this," she answered, holding out her work, some portion of which was rolled up. "I plait this straw and sell it for hats ; but plait as fast as I will, I can hardly do enough to buy my daily bread."

"Do you get no help from the parish?"

"No," she replied. "I have nothing given me except a trifle now and then from a neighbour."

It has been weary work for me since I lost my husband, and that was fifty years ago."

She looked, indeed, as if, to her, life had been labour and toil, and she had eaten the bread of sorrows. She stood there the embodiment of antiquity ; full of years, yet no doubt still clinging to life, though for her it could yield neither pleasure nor profit. Beggars are rare in the Black Forest ; it is a good trait amongst them ; though it may be due to the strong arm of the law rather than to any special moral development. Beggars, I say, are rare, and this woman was not a mendicant ; but as she stood enlarging upon her poverty and sorrows, it was evident that a trifling gift added to her day's earnings would be received with no disfavour. A few halfpence would have called down a shower of blessings, and a departure amidst loud hallelujahs ; but just to try the effect of a larger sum, I put into her hand a coin worth about a shilling.

The benedictions hovering about the lips were arrested. The old woman looked at the silver piece, then at the giver ; then, overcome with

emotion, found no words in which to express her thanks, and turned away in silence. She went down the road with slow and tottering steps, a wonderful exhibition of the tenacity of life under adverse circumstances.

The road from this point wound round, and following in the old woman's footsteps, I soon found myself at the village, buried here in the lonely height, out of sight and sound of the world—even the small world of Triberg. A few scattered houses ; a man wading in a blood-red pool, evidently used for dyeing purposes ; an inn, where the host and hostess sat at a small table at the further end of a big square room, and looked as if they were hatching treason or meditating murder. The landlord was rough and surly, as he drew small (but refreshing) German beer for a few straggling wayfarers. Probably it was all fancy, but had I slept there that night I should have barred and bolted my door before turning in.

A small church opposite, with a hideous interior, stood on slightly rising ground, and pointed its spire heavenwards. Amongst the

simple graves scattered around, happy children, with the carelessness of youth, were playing at hide-and-seek, startling the sacred precincts with their shouts and gambols, troubled with small thought or respect for the dead. They know nothing of death ; for them the King of Terrors does not exist. But presently comes the age when youth, budding into man and maidenhood, looks upon death with sentimental melancholy ; if it comes to them it is in the nature of a sacrifice, and so they meet it bravely. Next, in ripe manhood (the age of mere sentiment having passed), death seems too far off and impossible to be realized. Finally, in age, looking forward, it seems to approach with slow and gradual steps ; looking back, to have come with wings. Death is realized, but, it is to be hoped, no longer as the King of Terrors.

Roads right and left beyond the village seemed to give promise of beauty ; but I left them for others to explore, and turned back towards Triberg : skirted the wide plain with its depression that looked as if it might once have been a lake ; down once more amongst the overshadowing

pinces, beside the rushing waterfall, and on to the bridge where the student had parted company with his hat. That hat, no doubt, was lying at the bottom of the troubled pool ; he and his companions were far away by this time ; another hat purchased, for which probably he would pay by the loss of a dinner or two, for these students often calculate their expenses to a fraction, and neglect, with the happy disposition of their class, to put down any margin for contingencies.

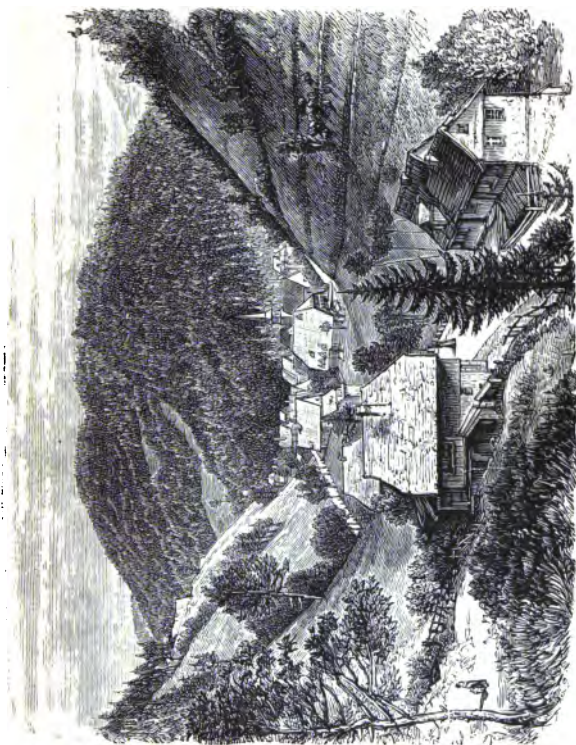
There is much to be seen about Triberg. No one, reaching it by carriage, should omit to take train to Hornberg, one of the most beautiful and wonderful bits of railway travelling in existence. Magnificent views follow each other in rapid and breathless succession. Often the scene on either side is so grand you are puzzled which way to look ; greedy of so many wonders you fear to lose the least of them. For once you quarrel with the speed of the train and wish it would crawl on its way. You may stand outside on the stage of the railway carriage, and literally hover over deep, glorious precipices, taking care

that the guard does not pounce upon you in his perambulations.

Now the train winds far up the hills amongst the woods, over roads cut out of the solid rock ; you look down upon slopes of pines into the valley beneath. There the stream is running fast, houses are scattered about, people are working in the fields—all is life, sunshine, and unimaginable beauty. Surely it was of such a scene that Montgomery wrote :

“ If God hath made this world so fair,
Where sin and death abound,
How beautiful beyond compare
Will Paradise be found ! ”

The line is intersected by innumerable small tunnels, and the train is constantly rushing out of momentary darkness into the full blaze of sunlight and all the glories of the Black Forest, which culminate in the short railway journey between Hornberg and St. Georgen. You are above the tops of the pine-covered hills ; can see beyond them into the depths of the skies ; a great expanse of country lies around. The valley is far below, and men and women are dwarfed to Lilliputians. As the train rushes on



NUSSBACH, NEAR TRIBERG.

you gain a sensation of freedom, almost of flying, inexpressibly delicious. The beauties of the road are as nothing compared with these beauties of the line. There, after all, you are more or less on the dead level of the valley, and charming exceedingly as even that is, the grand feeling of expanse, of soaring above the hills and the world, given by the railway, is absent. Now rushing round curves and sweeps, and passing from one chain to another, now crossing lofty viaducts and looking sheer down into the valley, you begin to wonder whether all this is reality or a dream from which you will presently awaken.

In returning I went on to Villingen, but the road beyond St. Georgen loses its beauty, and but for the quaint little town at the end, is not worth the journey.

Villingen is a small walled town of great antiquity, but many traces of its age have disappeared under the ravages of fire and war, time and change, as is too often the case in most ancient towns. Down the long, straight street you might fire a cannon from one end to the other without fear of damage to life or limb, and

probably no one would be any the wiser. It has a few antiquated buildings—the gateways, an old church, and especially an old Rathhaus, with wonderful windows, and gargoyles frightful in their grinning ugliness, but curious and interesting from extreme age. The edges are everywhere rounded and crumbling away. The circular stone staircase will scarce admit you upwards. You feel that if the town dates back to the year 800, this might well have been the palace of its first youth.

Hearing that it contained a museum of wonderful antiquities, mediæval rooms in good preservation, and gloomy dungeons which out-rivalled those of the New Castle of Baden, I endeavoured to gain admittance. First I was directed to a sort of mayor of the town, whose permission was necessary. Arrived at the house of this dignitary, I found an old priest patiently ringing the door-bell, and obtaining no response. We pulled in turns; all in vain. The bell re-echoed through the upstairs corridors, followed by ominous silence. Not even ghostly footsteps responded to the appeals.

"Perhaps he is asleep," suggested the priest.

"Or he may be dead," I returned, by way of improvement, mindful of the laws of progression.

At this moment a door in the passage opened, and a tailor occupying the ground floor appeared on the scene.

"Neither one nor the other," cried he. "His highness" (I will not vouch for the exactness of the title) "has gone to a marriage at Donaueschingen, and will not be home for some time. If you pull the bell down you will get no other answer."

"But where's the wife?" demanded the baffled ecclesiastic.

"Oh, *she* always goes out on her own score when her husband's away," returned the tailor. "Makes it a holiday; looks up her friends; has dinner with one, supper with another; chatters away like a magpie; comes home two minutes before the train's due. Women are such frivolous things—think of nothing but dress, and gossip, and scandal."

The tone was so genuinely aggrieved, one could but see the tailor spoke feelingly upon the

subject. It was very evident, poor fellow, that however much Mr. Tailor might make the garments that have passed into a proverb, Mrs. Tailor was the one who wore them.

The priest and I departed together—fellow sufferers at the hands of two persons contracting a marriage at Donaueschingen, which, perhaps, at the end of a month, no one would repent more than they, poor, deluded souls. The old priest went his way, I went mine—in search of the custodian of the museum of antiquities. He lived in a small house opposite the church and the Rathhaus, where his wife kept a milliner's shop—a quiet rendezvous for the Villingen ladies, where possibly Mrs. Mayor was at that moment trying on fashions with a bosom friend equally vain and frivolous, as the tailor would have said.

Fate was against me that day. The man had gone to Triberg, and the wife would as soon part with her life as with the key, to any one but the mayor—and he, as we have seen, had gone off to a wedding, and if Mrs. Mayor was anywhere on the premises she had been smuggled

upstairs. So, giving up the chase after the beautiful, the curious, and the antique, I contented myself with a visit to the hospital. This, too, was a strange old place, beautiful in its age. Cloisters there were, with ancient, lovely Gothic windows and pillars, and walls with inscriptions and frescoes and portraits of dead-and-gone bishops and monks. But an air of sickness, disease, and death lurked about the place ; a subtle feeling of infection and danger ; it was dull, gloomy, and not very clean, and the porter who opened the door was a nightmare in himself, poor fellow. A very short visit was more than enough, and I hurried out into the pure light, the free air of heaven.

Down near the station a river ran its course, clear as crystal. It literally swarmed with fish, and made one long for a little sport. That being out of the question, I sat me down on the bank and watched their movements, and revelled in the cool, green grass, the bright sun and blue sky—all the beauties of this fair world ; listened to the chirping of myriads of grasshoppers ; and, to while away the time, indited a letter to a

friend in command of one of Her Majesty's training brigs, who probably at that moment was cruising about the Channel, ordering the master-at-arms, with the assistance of the boat-swain's mate, to administer wholesome castigation to a refractory youth ; or, if a storm was raging, putting in a word now and then to the boys drilling aloft ; walking the decks, as good Lady W. firmly believed (a joke too good to be lost), with an umbrella over his head, to protect himself from showers that never came from the clouds. My epistle, naturally, was dated *Villingen*, and he had the abomination to reply with an attempted pun : "Yours duly received from the town with the *Villingous* name."

At last I saw the train from Donaueschingen puffing along the line—perhaps bringing the truant mayor, whose absence had caused me the loss of the wonderful museum of antiquities. But were they so wonderful after all ? I made up my mind, like the fox and the grapes, that they were unworthy a regret ; so I gathered up my possessions, and prepared to migrate.

This town of Donaueschingen, eight miles

from Villingen, is interesting as possessing, it is said, the source of the classic Danube. In the garden of the Prince of Fürstenberg is a round basin filled with crystal water. That water, for ever bubbling up, overflows, and is conducted by a subterranean passage into the Briegach—the river that, at Villingen, was so tantalizingly full of fish. From this point the Briegach takes the name of the Danube.

And what a wonderful course it follows thenceforth! What a glorious river it is, this “blue Danube!” How picturesque and beautiful from Ratisbonn to Linz; how grand and wild right down from Linz to Vienna; with its rugged banks, its towering rocks, its grey, frowning chasms, its curves and rapids, its monasteries perched on the summits of wild precipices, looking into the dark, deep waters; its Valhalla with its glittering, endless flight of steps: until, reaching Vienna, it sweeps past the gay capital, a proud, silent stream, wending its way onwards to the Black Sea.

To return to Villingen. The train puffed into the station, and ere long I found myself back in

Triberg. In the interval of absence "men had come and men had gone ;" there were new faces at the table d'hôte as well as old. The gathering was large, the dinner, as usual, a slow and solemn waste of time. Expressions of dissatisfaction at the hotel were often heard, but I saw little to complain of. The only nuisance was in the shape of a young Englishman, who every evening sat down to the piano in the reading-room — where a little silence and quiet was wanted after dinner to digest the latest newspaper—and for an hour would strum through a series of performances more or less extemporized, and more or less annoying. It is an occasional wonder where some people acquire a certain courage, an absence of good feeling, of the consideration due to others' rights. This youth, night after night, was an unmitigated nuisance, yet would turn round at the end of his performance with a smile of benevolent satisfaction, a self-constituted hero, little dreaming that in reality he was far more of an inquisitor.

The time came to say good-bye to Triberg. I left it early one morning by the diligence that

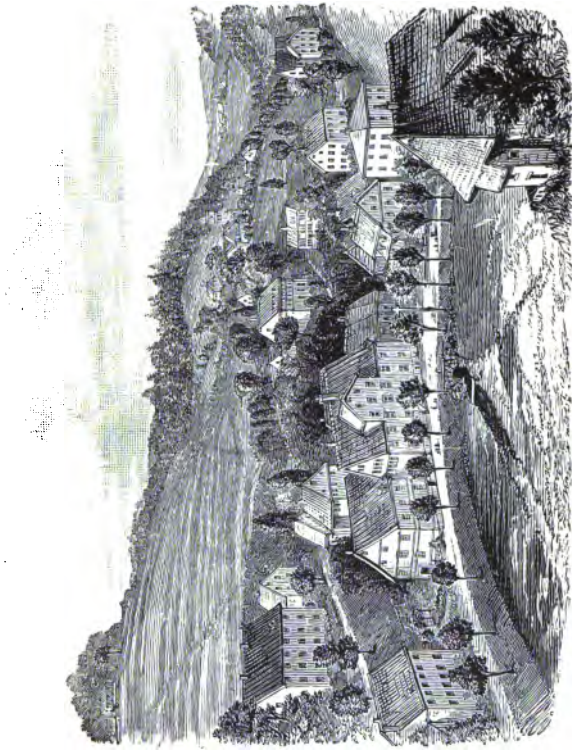
started from the post-office at seven, and was sufficiently lucky to get the one outside place next the post-boy. These outside places are not to be secured beforehand in the Black Forest, and you can only make sure of them by being first in the field. Some diligences have one or two outside places, others have half a dozen.

It was a glorious morning, and the sun already gave promise of a hot day. We swept up the steep road, lined with pine trees, with a speed that was slow and stately, in spite of the four horses, as lazy and contrary this morning as they could be. The post-boy lost half his time in whipping them up with a very primitive weapon ; and the lash, constantly coming into contact with the harness, demanded, every two minutes, a fresh supply of cord. This kind of thing is irritating, and the mystery was, how the post-boy kept his temper, and with every diminishing yard of string grew more and more smiling and amiable.

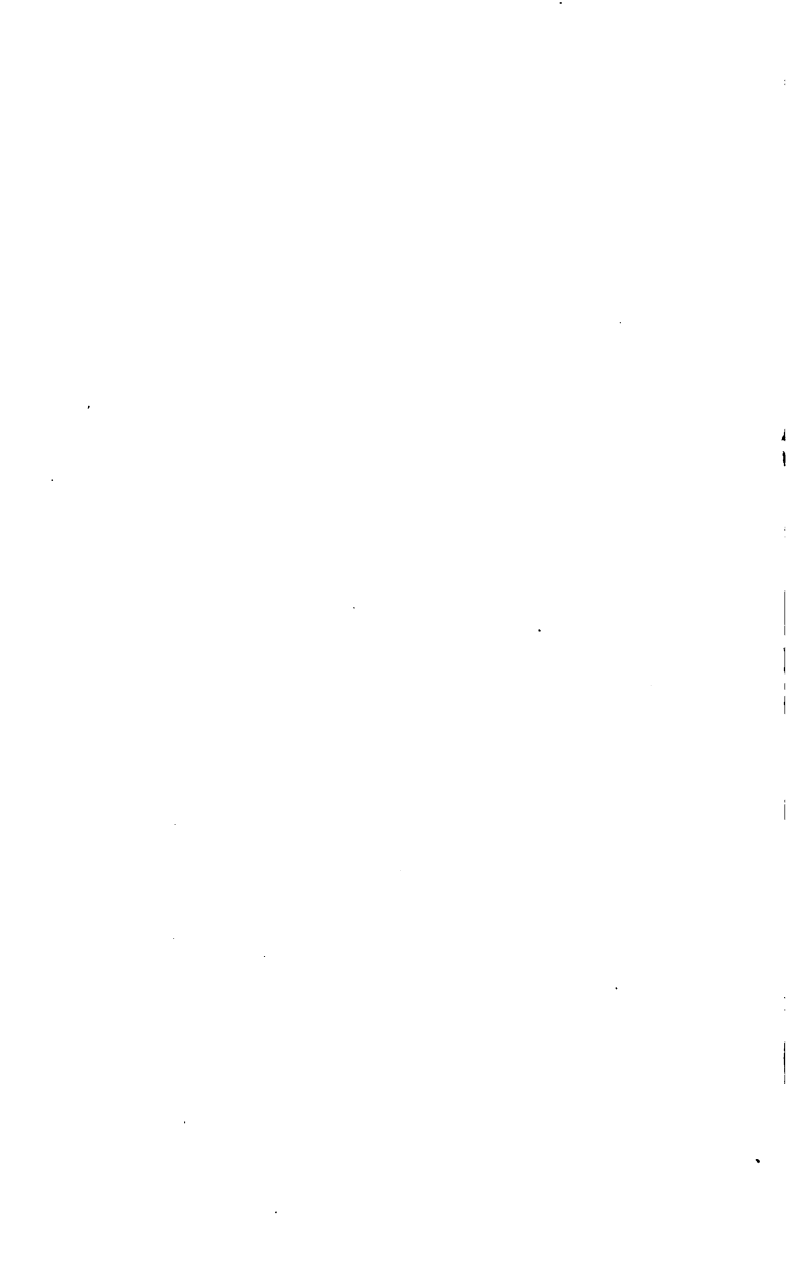
But in time we found ourselves skirting the wide green plain above the waterfall, and galloping over the road where I had met Methuselah's

widow. Sweeping round the curve in good form (the horses on the level road had become tractable), we soon came to a halt at the village post-office. Here we took up the mail-bags, and started off again. The drive now opened up wide and extensive views. For the moment we had left the immediate neighbourhood of woods and forests, and seemed to have climbed above hills and valleys into other regions. The air was fresh and sparkling, though the heat of the sun was already tropical, and it was a question, whether, after all, the inside passengers had not the best of the bargain. The view over long stretches of country, bounded by far-off, shadowy hills, was for the moment somewhat barren and uninteresting. One amiable old German excitedly put his head out of the window and pointed to the highest mountain in the Black Forest; but it was difficult to get up any enthusiasm for an elevation so distant that its outlines could scarcely be traced.

Small villages broke our journey into mild dissipations and varieties; road-side inns offered tempting refreshments to man and beast—an



GUTENBACH, NEAR TRIBURG.



invitation the post-boy never failed to make the most of; until at last we reached the quaint, picturesque village of Schönwald. It is a colony of watchmakers, and you might hear and see them at work in their factories and houses, standing in shirt-sleeves at their tables, singing in rhythm to the tap of their hammers, with windows open to the free air and blue sky. They looked cool, calm, and happy, a perfect picture of contented life. Our arrival was the event of the morning—probably of the whole twenty-four hours; we gave out mail-bags and took in others; a small crowd quickly flocked round us—to transfer their polite attention and ardent gaze to the post-office as soon as we were off again.

From Schönwald we still ascended, until, at the inn Zum Kreuz, we reached the top of the pass, the summit of the hill Sommerau, and a height of 3500 feet above the level of the sea. This spot forms the water-shed between the Rhine and the Danube. Distant views met the eye—undulating plains, somewhat barren; the highest mountain still visible; far-off ranges of

hills and forests—but no near object calling for attention. A great stretch of country without any special feature to recommend it or to cause emotion. It was difficult to agree with the amiable old German, who again put his head out of window and declared that he thought this one of the grandest views in the whole of the district.

Now descending a winding road—as the old lady had said in the Triberg music-shop, the Black Forest is all up and down hill—we soon lost the barren prospect. Softer outlines surrounded us, hills verdant and gently sloping, rural scenery, broken and diversified. At length the church spire and houses of Furtwangen, reposing in a hollow, watered by a flowing stream, sloping hills stretching above and around the town for a great distance. Clattering down the steep hill, the diligence came to a stand at the post-office; the post-boy threw off the reins with an air that showed his sense of importance and responsibility, the mail-bags were discharged, and the officials became immersed in the weighty duty of sorting letters. Those who

came to the window to ask a question were greeted with a look and a growl that hurried them away as effectually as if a loaded pistol had been pointed at them, and the offence was not repeated.

Furtwangen is given up to industry. Its inhabitants all look, in a quiet way, as if, for them, the "pleasures of idleness" had no attractions. Watch and clock manufactories abound; much wood-carving; and here some of the best orchestrions are made, and exported to all parts of the globe. One maker said that he sent many to Russia, America, and even the Colonies, which alone gave sufficient occupation for all the resources at his disposal. There is an exhibition here also, but it is very inferior to that of Triberg.

From many of the windows you might see—as we had seen at Schönwald—men at work in their sleeves; carving, making clock-works, putting them together; all so busy and cheerful, looking so cool and happy as they sang at their work, whilst we were blazing in the outside sunshine, that one almost felt inclined to envy the

even tenour of their lives. In one of these houses lived the youth whose broad, jolly, good-natured face had so "fetched" me at the music-shop at Triberg. He and his father divided their time, in turns, between Triberg and their factory, just outside Furtwangen. I had promised the son that I would look him up at Furtwangen, and he should take me over their factory; but to-day, as chance would have it, both father and son were absent. All I saw, in an upper room, was the comely mother, surrounded by cages of mechanical singing birds, now silent, ladling out steaming soup at a round table, to an army of little hungry open mouths, by no means as silent as the birds. She was distressed at the absence of both husband and son—a rare occurrence she hastened to add; and I could only promise to repeat the visit if ever opportunity arose. In her hospitable impulse, she would have pressed some of the steaming soup upon me, and seemed distressed that I would not walk away with half a dozen of the bird-cages—payment was not in the least necessary. It was at once evident that the good woman had trans-

mitted her heart to the son, and even with interest. It is very pleasant and refreshing to come across these self-forgetting natures in the world ; there are not too many of them.

So declining the soup and the bird-cages, I went quickly back down hill, wondering if ever before there had been so hot a day. The white roads seemed to glow like a furnace, and there was no shade anywhere. And Furtwangen, though picturesquely situated amidst the sloping hills, had little in the form of antiquity to attract attention, beyond a row of quaint houses and shops with dark, gabled roofs, that did their best to enliven the banks of the little river Briege.

After a halt of two hours or so, we were once more ready for departure. The new diligence proved accommodating. There were outside seats for half a dozen passengers, and therefore room enough and to spare for all. We started with four strong horses, and a post-boy who had grown grey and old and fat in the service, and knew how to drive. And how he did drive ! Ascending for some distance, then crossing a mountain pass, presently a full view

of the glorious Simonsthal burst upon every one's astonished and enraptured vision. This descent into the valley was perhaps the grandest, most sublime bit of travelling, yielding the most vivid impressions, of all I saw in the Black Forest.

From a great wooded height, we gazed far down into a long, wide, cultivated vale. The opposite hills were high and diversified. Slopes, now immense stretches of forest, now fields and orchards, now barren and rugged, seemed to spread before one in endless succession; but the general impression was that of a valley fertile and picturesque in the highest degree—a smiling garden of boundless extent. Now we passed through cuttings in the woods, and now in short, zigzag roads dashed downwards; so near the edge, and with such speed, turning the sharp angles so rapidly, that it required faith in one's coachman to preserve a calm exterior.

Down we went, glorious woods and fields around us; a stream running through the valley; a cataract tumbling from the very summit of the opposite hills; houses and villages perched so far above the world, it seemed as a nightmare

or a dream to reach them. At last our zigzag descent gave place to a long, level road, shaded by trees. Splendid chestnuts grew in abundance, rich apples and luscious plums. Bowling along, we had only to put out the hand and grasp the fruit.

The sun shone fiercely overhead, throwing lights and shadows upon the landscape ; the skies wore a celestial blue only seen on such days and in spots so lovely ; the air came laden with scent as we galloped along ; now a plum or an apple was gathered from a tempting, overhanging branch. They grew in myriads, these plums and apples. It seemed that we were in fairy-land, and here certainly was food for Paradise. It was all too beautiful ; one of the loveliest days of the world, gilding one of the loveliest spots of earth ; a day and a drive to be remembered.

After awhile we came to the first break in our journey, with a ten minutes' halt for rest and a change of horses. And here, too, alas, we also changed our post-boy. A small primitive village, where people were threshing or beating out

grain ; curious signs outside the bakers' shops ; the windows of many a small cottage adorned with flowers and vines. Finally, a little church brought one to the end of the village—and the end of life.

But the day was too glorious and sunny for meditative or melancholy thought, and we started onward with fresh horses and fresh spirit. The road gradually assumed more of life and animation. Quaint villages now and then varied the scene ; the great beauty of the valley had given place to a wider plain, fields, and distant ranges ; until at length, passing a factory or two, we entered the straggling, beautifully situated town of Waldkirch, surrounded by romantic hills and heights, forest-crowned, ruin-crowned. On all sides were wooded slopes and grand undulations, which make of Waldkirch one of the most picturesque spots in the Black Forest.

Under the shadow of one of the hills there stood the hotel and pension of St. Margherita. I had meant to push on that night by train to Freiburg ; but falling in love with the situation of the house, with the house itself, with the

romantic beauty of Waldkirch and its whole surroundings, it was impossible to leave so many attractions. Even then the sun was sinking behind the hills in a haze of glory, flecking the sky with bright cloudlets that every moment changed colour, and completed the setting of the beautiful picture. In the gathering twilight the outlines of the hills grew soft and dark, the ruin-crowned height before us was fading into mystery. A sunrise in the morning from this spot would be something never to be forgotten. Therefore, unable to leave, I stayed.

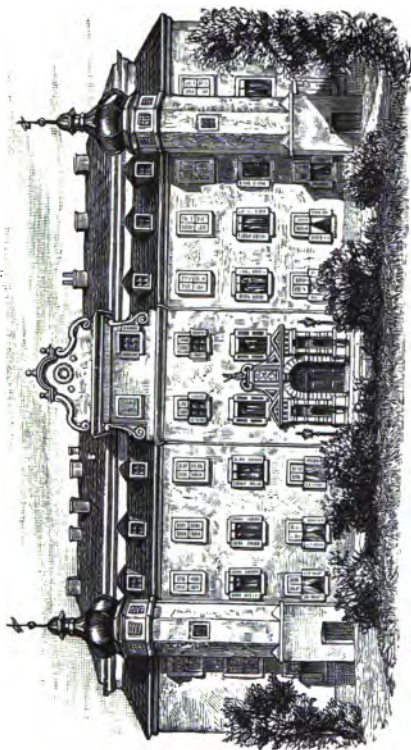
The house itself had much to do with this remaining. A large, rambling building, with great rooms, and immense corridors, and wide, old, carved staircases. Ages ago it had been a nunnery. Year after year, age after age, nuns had walked these corridors like spectres from another world: and, silently as spectres, must have stolen across to the quaint old church adjoining. Or perhaps—who knows?—there may have been an underground passage connecting the nunnery with the sacred edifice.

The very sensation of sleeping in this wonder-

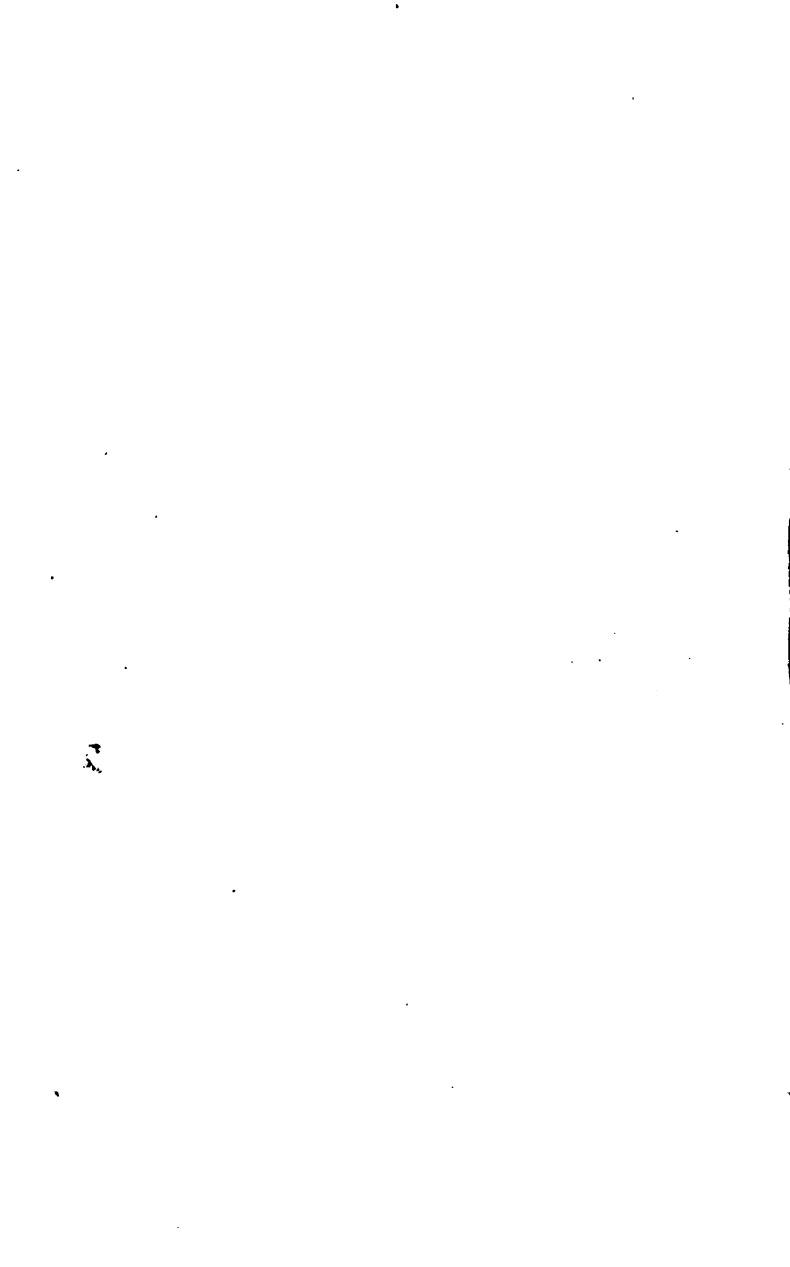
ful old house was almost enough to bring one to Waldkirch: certainly enough to detain one when there. And when darkness had fallen, the great gloomy corridors were peopled with a whole army of nuns; from every doorway seemed to issue a veiled and hooded figure.

But modern innovations had crept in. Gardens and vineyards, and lovely children playing about, making the old place ring again with their happy, careless laughter. Many people were staying in the house, and these children were amongst them. They were visions of beauty, in harmony with the surrounding scenery—the mother herself perhaps the loveliest and most distracting vision of all.

When the shades of night had fallen, and all surrounding nature was shut out in the deep silence and mystery of darkness, for want of better occupation I strolled through the town. The inhabitants were taking their ease at their doors. Young men and women patrolled the streets in wide links, arm in arm, making the most of youth, liberty, and happiness. Oil lamps were quaintly strung across the streets, in



ST. MARGHERITA.



pristine fashion, just as we may see them in some of our rare country places, where the modern misery of gas has not yet penetrated. It all seemed very unworldlike. As regards feelings and impressions, one might have been a thousand miles away from a civilized capital. Above and beyond the houses and the precincts of the town, a black line stretched itself, yet more dense than the starry heaven immediately above ; and there, one knew, were the silent woods, long stretches of darkness, where the trees whispered to each other in a language unknown to man. But in the town, by contrast, there was light and life and animation. Gradually, even there it subsided. Lights were put out ; songs and choruses ceased ; youth and age disappeared ; shutters were swung to and bolted ; the streets were left to the night and the stars and the benediction of the skies.

I, too, went my way ; entered the great silent house ; with a solitary light that threw ghostly shadows, threaded the great wide staircase, and long, deserted passages. In every corner lurked a nun ; every door was opening, to send forth a

silent, hooded, sable figure, as it seemed to the imagination, excited by the darkness and the influence of the past upon these places. But whoever or whatever lurked there, they came and went with the silence of death: and the ghosts that flitted about cast no shadows.

Alas for the sunrise of the next morning! The glories of the previous day had culminated in a supernatural effort. The world woke to the melancholy music of a downpour that might have heralded a second deluge. Ruins, hills, undulations, wooded slopes, all the beauty and romance of Waldkirch—everything was buried in a wet, vapoury mist that mingled with the torrent from the clouds. A change, indeed, sad and disappointing, but, like much of life, inevitable. It had to be borne.

Breakfast over, and in company with a porter, conveying my luggage in a sort of covered baker's cart, I waded through torrents to the station. Ere long the train was making way through all the lovely and picturesque scenery, spoilt and blurred this morning by rain and mist. Then, in due time, at the quaint, pictur-

esque, old-world town of Freiburg, with its ancient towers, its vineyards, wooded slopes, and ruin-crowned heights; above all, its beautiful cathedral, full of grace, harmony, and just proportions, with its lovely open spire, and a surrounding view from its belfry that, once seen, is seen for ever.

CHAPTER V.

FREIBURG — THE GOVERNMENT PRISON — HÖLLENTHAL —
STERN INN — HÖLLSTEIG — TITISEE — SCHLUCHSEE — ST.
BLASIEN.

How melancholy but how true it is that, in travelling, our pleasures and our pains for the most part wait upon the elements. And though one of the subtle charms of a summer's sunny day may lie in the very feeling that it cannot last for ever, and may change with the hour, when the inevitable change comes it is the more intolerable from the very contrast that went before. We mourn our lost sunshine ; grow depressed, restless, and impatient ; gaze upwards again and again for the smallest vision of blue sky, that, like a watched-for visitor, seems to tarry so long ; and for the time being feel, in the way of happiness, insolvent and adrift.

So was it on entering the good old town of Freiburg. The previous day had been exquisite beyond comparison ; a day that only now and then comes to us ; standing out in a lifetime as beautiful above other days ; seeming to breathe an atmosphere of heaven rather than of earth ; full of an ethereal beauty which makes us feel as if, even without wings, we had the power of soaring into all that blue, vaulted distance. The glories of the day had culminated in a gorgeous sunset. The sky was studded with fleecy clouds that floated in mid-air like tinted opals ; the very atmosphere seemed to flash colours around ; the hills were thrown out in deep lights and shades ; the pine forests were gilded and touched into glowing life by the declining sun ; a glow for a moment deepening to crimson as he sank to the horizon. The ruin crowning the height opposite St. Margherita, and just above the railway station, stood out sharply and romantically amidst all the effects of sunset and twilight. And the town itself, surrounded, guarded, by these wooded heights, seemed wonderfully favoured. Full of repose ;

abounding in lives that, in the midst of all these beauties of creation, ought to be good and blest above the common lot of mankind.

But the next morning all had changed, simply because the clouds during the night had gathered, and the rain was coming down in a swift stream. The few steps from the station to the Zähringer Hof in Freiburg were yet enough to drench one through and through, and make one feel that when it rains in the Black Forest it rains in earnest. It was taking the old town at a disadvantage.

Happily the very sharpness and fierceness of the rain—like all violent outbursts, whether in nature or mankind—brought with it a promise of short duration. In effect, by the afternoon the waterspouts had ceased to empty themselves upon the earth. But the clouds remained ; mists hung about the hills ; a respite was granted, and nothing more.

Near the hotel were houses, large, white, and cool, with lovely gardens in which grew graceful acacias, many-coloured flowers and trailing creepers, vines and the delicate convolvulus.

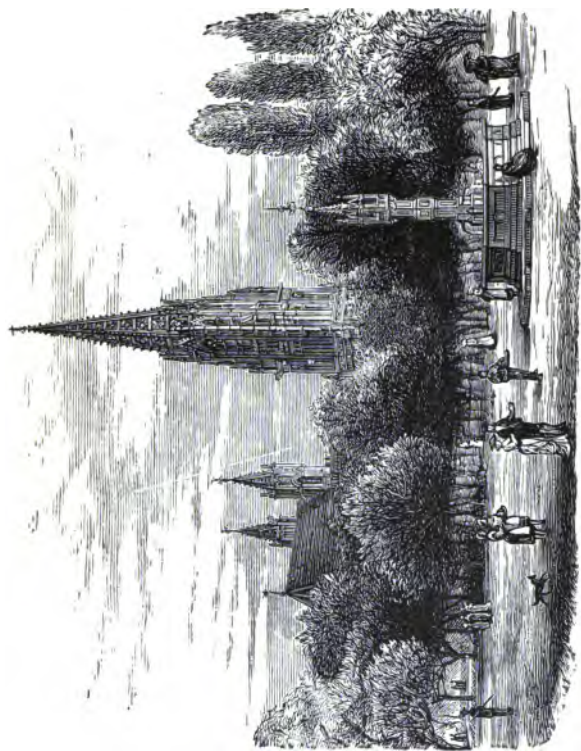
Opposite, in the busy life of the station, trains with their living freight were keeping up a constant rush and roar ; not very romantic, but very necessary to the demands of the nineteenth century. Upwards, to the left, you presently came to the principal street, adorned with two quaint Gothic fountains, the one with an odour of sanctity about it in the form of statues of bishops, knights, and saints of the church ; the other bearing the image of Berthold, Duke of Zähringen, who founded Freiburg about the end of the eleventh century. And above the sloping, gabled roofs of the houses, like a vision of fairy architecture, rose the exquisite, fretted spire of the cathedral.

Before the eleventh century Freiburg was a small village inhabited by miners. Since that time, like almost all these old continental towns, it has gone through many vicissitudes. Wars, the love of conquest, the rise and fall of empires, inevitably leave their mark upon the world. We would forgive this, if they only left us more traces of the past in these ancient towns—more of antiquity ; monuments of a strong and

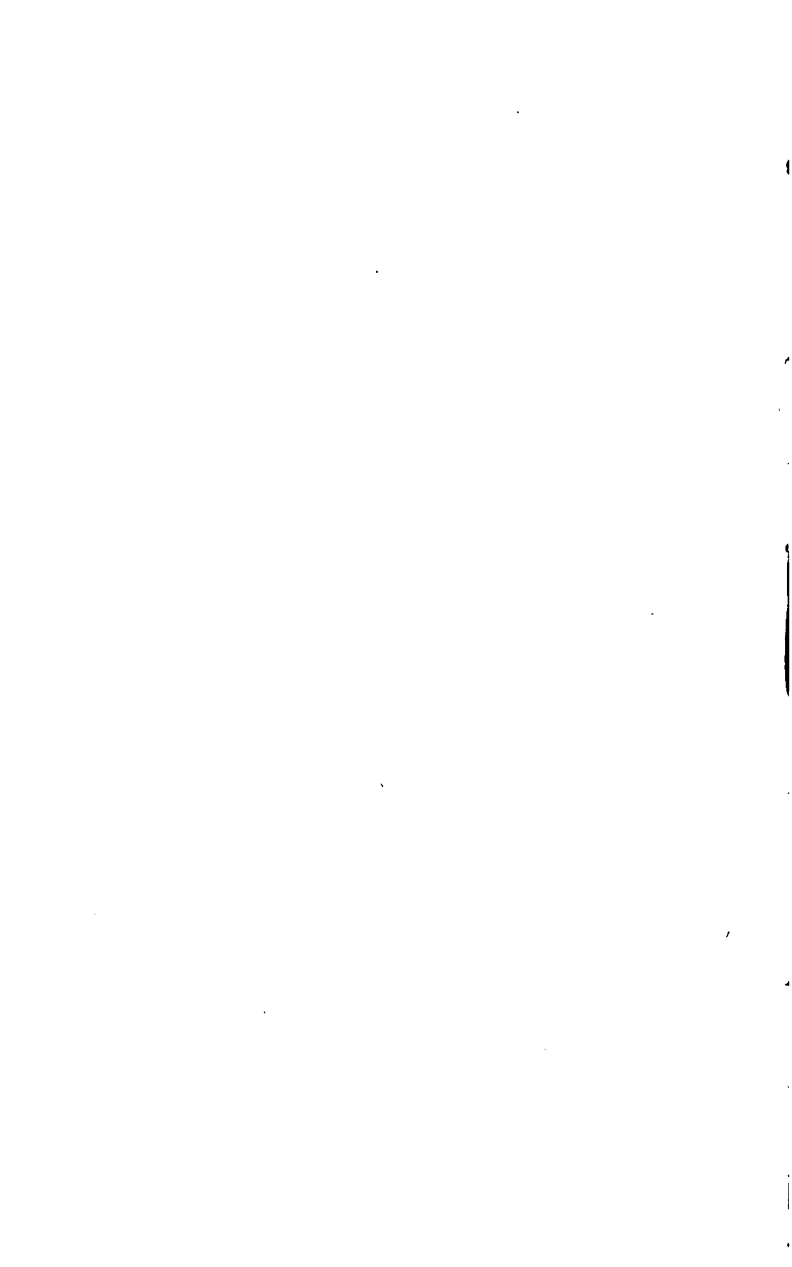
powerful age inhabited by a race of men earnest in all they did, in their very wars and works, their failings and vices, as much as in their virtues.

A great deal of Freiburg is modern and uninteresting from the antiquarian's point of view ; but there are a few quaint bits about it that stands out in contrast with the new. Houses that here and there remind one of the old-world streets of Holland, and seem to have been asleep for two or three centuries, while a new world was springing up around them. The gateways are ancient and curious, and certainly add much to the picturesque impression of the town ; especially the St. Martin's Thor, with its half-obliterated fresco, representing the legend of the saint sharing his cloak with a mendicant.

But the glory and ornament of Freiburg is its cathedral. With the exception of Cologne, it is said to be the only large Gothic Church in Germany in a state of completion. Without being of great size, it is of exquisite proportions, full of beauty, of delicate symmetry in its pointed arches and noble pillars. Many of the



FREIBURG.



windows are of wonderful old stained glass that throw a dim religious light over the interior. The sun, streaming in through the ancient windows, chequers the pavement with many colours, bathing pillars and arches in lights and shadows, raising them to a beauty that might adorn a fairer land than that of earth. Look which way you will, all is harmony so just that the building gives one the impression of being larger than it is in reality. The pulpit is a wonderful bit of stone-work, and there are good pictures and good carving in the chapels behind the choir.

When I first saw these chapels, service, or rather the confessional, was in progress. Devotees were kneeling before pictures and painted images, quietly waiting their turn to enter the confessional box. In the centre compartment, here open, without door or shutter, was seated a priest with a large cloth or towel held to his face, and in either wing a woman crouched in the corner, one confessing, the other biding her time. It was only possible to take a quiet, quick look at all ; one's presence amidst these

devotees seemed an intrusion. The chapels were not open to the public, and the old "Suisse," guarding the entrance like a dragon, had passed me in under a strict promise that I would not linger long. Even in the moments I remained I ran the gauntlet of many a pair of bright eyes, perchance disturbed many a train of introspective thought; for the fair devotees guessed too surely that the intruder was not there for purposes of unburdening a conscience, however great might be its load.

But the most conspicuous and most perfect portion of the cathedral is its tower and spire of open work, of exquisite finish, delicate as lace, a dream of architectural beauty. This spire, 365 feet high, may be seen for miles around, far and near; alike from plains watered by the Dreisam and the Rhine, and from wooded heights that slope upwards and outwards, chain beyond chain, in many directions, stretching up into cloudland.

From the summit of the tower the view is beautiful, extensive, and varied. Twelve miles away, the Rhine glows through wide plains;

nearer, the waters of the Dreisam run through the town ; far off are the blue Vosges mountains, misty and dark and purple, but ever graceful and dreamy. Again, in the opposite direction, beyond those wide plains, bounded by low wooded hills, commences the wild Höllenthal, one of the most picturesque and interesting valleys in the Black Forest.

Immediately beneath one's feet lies the town, surrounding the cathedral, as if to guard this treasure from the approach of enemies. The plan of the town may easily be traced ; its public buildings noted ; its church towers and steeples rising here and there in humble imitation of the glorious structure on which we stand. The river wends its quiet way onwards, like a large silver thread, calm, silent, and placid, type of many a life full of noble thoughts and quiet deeds.

The town is full of animation. Immediately below is the market-place, with its wonderful old Kaufhaus. The market is full of buyers and sellers ; women, with large white kerchiefs over their heads, are doing their best to get rid of

their wares, and so return home with a comfortable feeling of being wise and thrifty housewives. People are flitting to and fro, apparently silent as ghosts, since they are too far off to be heard. But the rattle of wheels charges like distant thunder through the streets, and if ghosts have vehicles, these cannot belong to any unearthly visitant. Further off, the barracks, with the soldiers moving about, form a cheerful break in the scene.

The life and energy of the town make the silence and repose of the great stretches of hill and valley beyond it all the more forcible by contrast. How strange it all seems, this disposition of the world in which we live. On the one hand a few small towns, relatively speaking, where men swarm and herd and hustle each other, go through all kinds of work and toil, rise up early and late take rest, eat the bread of sorrows in their struggle after fame and fortune, or, it may be, only their daily wage that barely keeps the wolf from the door ; and, on the other hand, those immense stretches of country—the greater portion of this beautiful earth—given up to the silence and solitude that have reigned

there since the creation, and seem to have been created for silence and solitude alone.

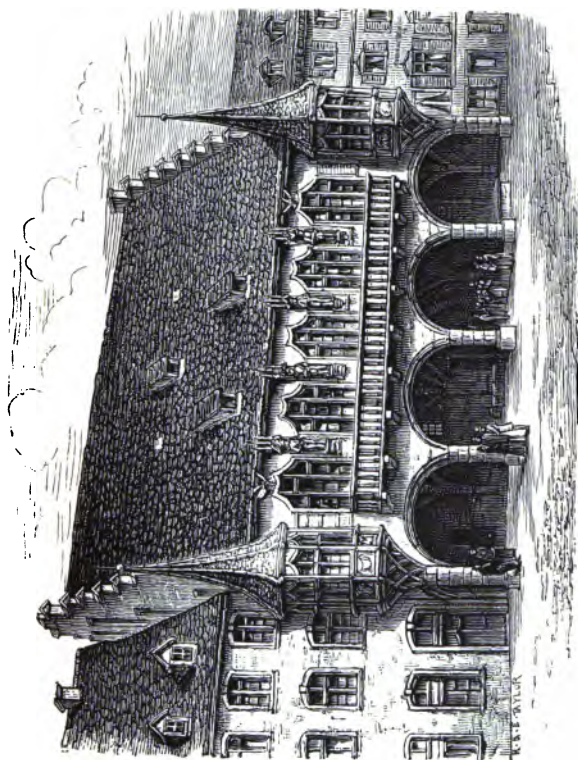
But not alone from the cathedral tower are wide and beautiful views apparent. Passing out by the Schwaben Thor, and ascending the Schlossberg amidst sloping vineyards, you presently reach the ruin-crowned height, and are rewarded by a yet lovelier view than that just described. For now the whole town lies spread before you, framed by surrounding hills ; and above the houses stands out the beautiful cathedral, throwing its refined and solemn influence over all. Through the open spire you may see the sky beyond, and the work looks so delicate and fragile it is difficult to realize that it has stood there for centuries, and is capable of standing there for centuries yet to come.

From this height the beauty of the situation of Freiburg was apparent ; a gem in a very lovely setting ; though, on this particular afternoon, overshadowed by gloomy clouds, and unrelieved by the lights and shades and laughing sunshine, which are to scenery what life is to the human frame.

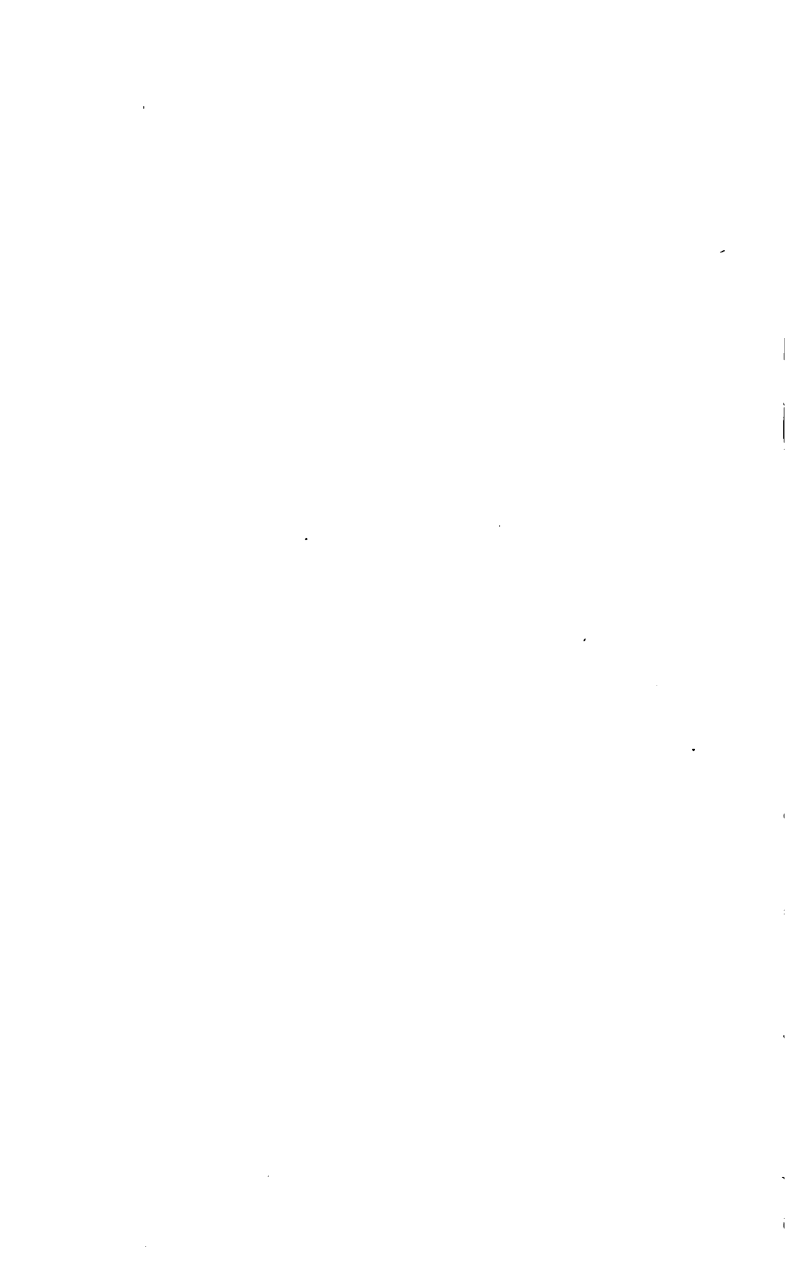
The Kaufhaus, or Merchants' Hall, just alluded to, in the market-place, is perhaps the most curious building in Freiburg, and apparently one of the most ancient, dating back to the fifteenth century. It is of Gothic architecture, with a round, arched portico supported by five pillars, a small turret on either side, jutting out beyond the rest of the structure. Curious frescoes and statues of the Emperors of Germany adorn the front, whilst coloured tiles decorate the slanting roof with its gabled ends.

Sunday morning I went to hear high mass at the cathedral, when, it was said, grand music would be heard. Of course different people have different estimates of what is music and what is grand. Certainly it was the very place for the enjoyment of good music ; but though the orchestra was not bad and the singing was passable, it fell very far short of its reputation. When half over, and the hour for the English church service had arrived, it was a relief to steal quietly away to a very different atmosphere and a simple ritual.

One of the most interesting visits is that to



KAUFHAUS.



the convict prison, just outside Freiburg. Here, again (strange fate), I was met with the answer that the governor was away at a marriage in the town—just as though marriages were for ever taking place in the Black Forest. However, more fortunate than at Villengen (not having a woman's will to deal with), after a few preliminary ceremonies, the great prison doors swung back, admitted me within their precincts, and swung to again with an ominous sound.

The prisoners here are all sentenced to solitary confinement, be the term long or short. Nothing could be better organized or regulated. The long passages were as clean, the iron rails as bright, as though built but yesterday. No sound re-echoed through the great building, of which one wing remains to be added. I was admitted into several of the cells, but as a rule visitors are not allowed to enter them or to speak to the prisoners. Solitary confinement, with a silence as profound as that reigning within monastic walls, is the stern rule ; the latter, to some of them, probably a greater punishment than the loss of liberty. But, without entering many

cells, the warder slipped aside the little wooden slide in the door, about three inches square, through which one is able to see into most of them.

The prisoners were all at work, some at one trade, some at another. Many of the faces convinced one that they were in excellent keeping, and could not do better than remain there for the rest of their days. When they came out, the chances were that they would soon find their way back again. No power on earth would keep such faces and such expressions out of mischief. Others, again, must evidently have got into prison through the force of untoward circumstances; a cruel fate more strong than they; faces that were never born, never meant to stand in a felon's dock, or to yield to the temptation of crime. Here the general expression was one of melancholy and dejection. One longed to enter, bid them be of good courage, hope for better days, and a chance of redeeming what had been wrong in the past. But this was not permitted. Only if there is anything in mesmeric influence, in a sympathy which unconsciously asserts its

presence, surely a glimmer of hope must have darted through the souls of some of those poor wretches, making their present life more bearable, their future less dark. Who can tell the remorse and regret, the misery and despair of the "might have been," which must eat into the very souls of the few out of these thousands, who, in a moment of sudden weakness or dire temptation, have fallen from their "high estate" as honest men?

The chapel was fitted up in a series of small boxes, or compartments, so that no one prisoner could see another. Sunday morning is the only time they are allowed to break silence and talk to the minister, as he catechises, questions, and does his best to convert them from the error of their ways. Sunday morning, consequently, is, to some of them, probably the happiest time of the week.

The bakers were at work in the bakery, making the day's consumption of bread—or, more probably, the morrow's. Great ovens, seven times heated, immense baskets full of dark brown loaves that sent forth a steaming, savoury odour,

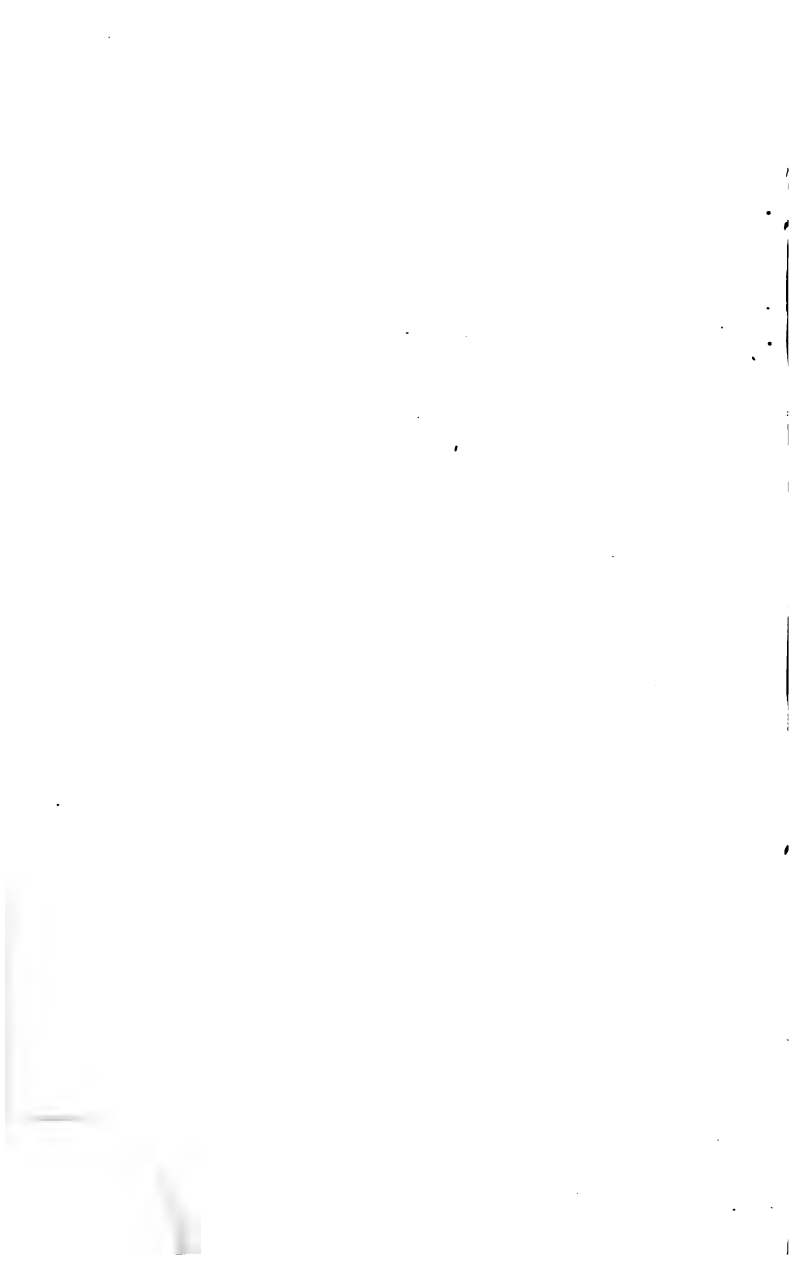
that might have adorned a king's table. The men, with nothing on but loose trowsers, looked as jolly and happy as sandboys, and in midwinter one might have envied them their berth. But it was midsummer, and none but salamanders could have stood coolly before those ovens.

I was sorry to leave the quiet prison, where calm reigned so conspicuously ; where the long, silent corridors, white, clean, and bright, were positively cheerful, in spite of the sad histories they enclosed. Back in Freiburg, I came upon a wedding at the cathedral—probably the very marriage at which the governor was “ assisting.” Smart carriages, to which there seemed no end, were dashing away from the doors, full of people dressed in dazzling raiment.

It was one of my last impressions of Freiburg. That afternoon I left it, and once more entered the Black Forest by the Höllenthal, or Valley of Hell. Out through the quaint streets and the Schwaben Thor, crossing a bridge that spanned the river, the town was soon numbered among the things of the past. The river frothed over its rocky bed ; a few picturesque, straggling



OLD GATEWAY, FREIBURG.



houses lined the banks ; a large, and somewhat uninteresting, plain stretched on either hand, bounded by low, undulating, wooded hills. All this narrowed and disappeared at the entrance to the Höllenthal, by many considered, it has already been remarked, one of the finest valleys in the Schwarzwald.

The beginning of the valley is called Himmelreich, or "Kingdom of Heaven," chiefly, it is said, from the height of the mountains, their fertility and beauty, and an absence of the wild grandeur which distinguishes the valley as you get further into it. Then the mountains contracted and closed in. Bare, frowning, perpendicular rocks obstructed our progress. Again, wooded heights succeeded the rocks, and the valley was clothed with trees that whispered, and ferns and wild flowers that lined the river banks.

But the really most sublime part was on reaching the Höllenpass, where the mountains closed in so nearly that they overshadowed the road and steeped it in a gloom at once grand and impressive. To this no doubt the valley

owes its name, of awful sound in its English translation, ordinary and matter-of-course enough in the original. For about half an hour we were travelling through a wild, magnificent ravine, to which was added the rushing of the little river Hölle. Every now and then we almost lost view of the sky, and, under cover of overhanging rocks, might have been entering portals leading to unknown depths. All this terminated in a point, where the rocks, overgrown with pines and underwood on the one side, bare and precipitous on the other, rose to a considerable height, called the Hirschsprung, on the summit of which is the carved figure of a stag, as if about to leap over the chasm.

The valley now opened out, and the scenery lost its wild and gloomy aspect. Wooded slopes succeeded the frowning rocks, and the road winding about the mountains disclosed at every step fresh beauties. Wayside houses, lone and desolate; an inn where the landlord on the steps looked as if he thought we were acting unfairly by him in not putting up under the shadow of the sign, Zum Adler. Yet further, a



HIRSCHSPRUNG.

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white chapel in the valley, with a dark spire that stood out in bold relief against the hilly background ; a few houses, surrounding the church, constituting the village of Höllsteig. Finally, a few saw-mills by the river-side, leading to the large white inn, Sternen.

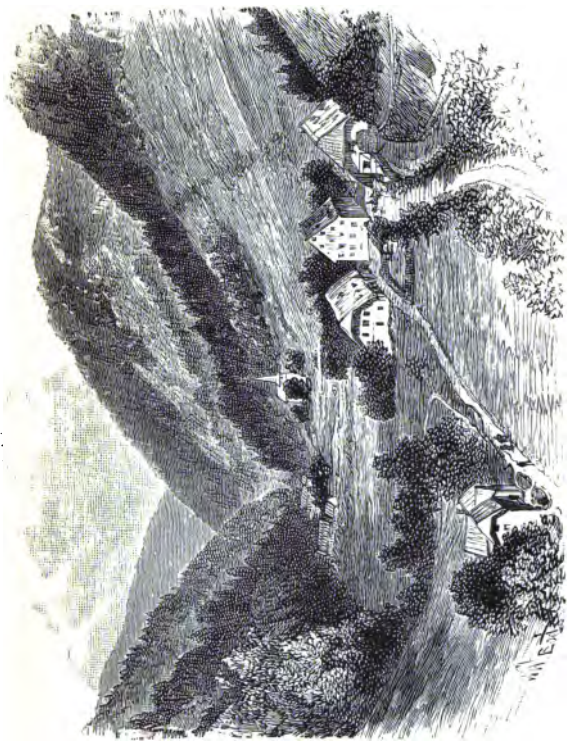
Here I was to find quarters for the night, and the carriage that had brought me so far on my road would return to Freiburg. Nor should I be sorry to see the last of it. Though supplied by the Hotel Zähringer, it was the worst vehicle and the worst driver that fell to my lot throughout the Black Forest.

The situation of the inn was strangely beautiful, though nothing could well exceed its loneliness. It stood in the midst of a lovely paradise. Few spots in the whole Forest are more favoured. Wooded and fertile hills rose on all sides. People come here and remain for weeks together ; and to all who want a period of rest and quiet retreat from the world it may safely be recommended. Dull and gloomy, somewhat sad and depressing, it undoubtedly is, but there are times when even these influences are acceptable. And

there are people so cheerfully disposed that they would be happy if cast adrift on a desert island.

Near the inn was the entrance to the Raven-nathal, a wild valley and ravine leading to a small, picturesque lake. Close by, the river, running its noisy course, turned the old wheels of the saw-mills down below, setting in motion the ponderous machinery. Opposite the inn was a small church capable of holding just six people ; a curious little erection that might have been a votive chapel in the days when pilgrimages were in vogue in the Black Forest. And what lovelier spot than this to call forth all the sublime and religious emotions supposed to accompany a pilgrimage ? Whether they really do or not is another matter.

The inn was almost deserted. The season was over, and all had departed, except a small group consisting of a mother, governess, maid, and two troublesome children. The large rooms looked empty and ghostlike ; the outside gloom penetrated into the house. As twilight deepened into night, the great mountains with their dark pines, where the night winds whispered and



HÖLLENTHAL.

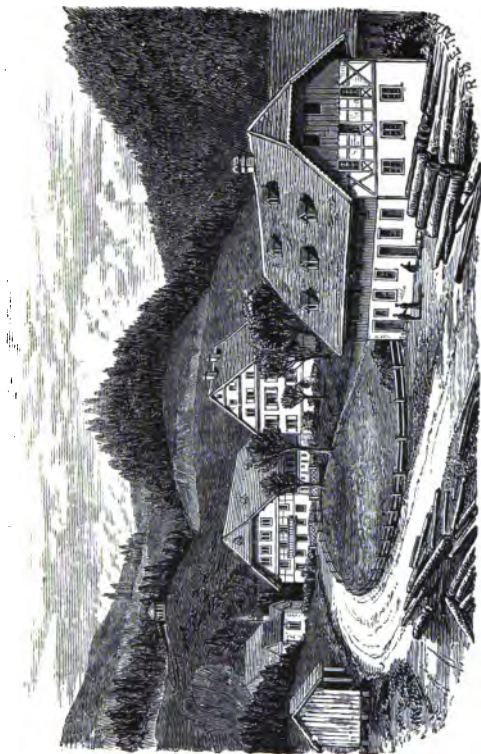
murmured, seemed endless in extent, emblematical of despair, and solitude, and death ; blackness and silence everywhere, stretching, for all one could see, to the ends of the earth ; no sound in earth or air but the murmur of the river as it ran through the valley.

In the gathering night up flashed the diligence from Freiburg, the advancing lights glowing like the eyes of a fiery monster. A few moments' pause, and away it went again, the bells on the horses—few of the horses about here have bells—jingling mysteriously, almost musically, long after it has passed out of sight. As I listened to them, mine host discoursed sweet music of his own in praises upon his house and its surroundings—praises, no doubt, well merited, though modesty, perhaps, would have suggested silence. Through the summer, he said, he was generally full of people, who spent, many of them, weeks at Höllsteig enjoying the baths, excursions, and mountain air.

I chatted long with the landlord, and finally, before turning in, explored the large stables, where four splendid white horses were being

groomed and harnessed by a post-boy, flitting about like a will-o'-the-wisp. The light from his lantern threw a weird gleam over his features, reminding one of Schalken's pictures. The diligence for which he was preparing would on this occasion start at midnight. The buildings were all wrapped in gloom and silence, as profound as that which reigned upon the hills and in the depths of the dark forests. The glimmer from the stable window was the one solitary token of life and habitation in all the surrounding blackness. The day had been hot and sultry, but up here in the mountains it was well-nigh cold and cheerless as winter.

When night and gloom had fled away and given place to sunshine and blue skies, I said good-bye to Höllsteig, and was once more on the road. Its finest point was at the Cross Rock, where the river rushed over its shallow bed at the bottom of a deep, wild ravine, whilst the mountains rose above, gloomy and frowning in spite of the sunshine and the warm, soft air. The landscape widened ; opposite hills sloped upwards in long, gradual stretches, here green



STERN INN, HÖLLSTEIG.

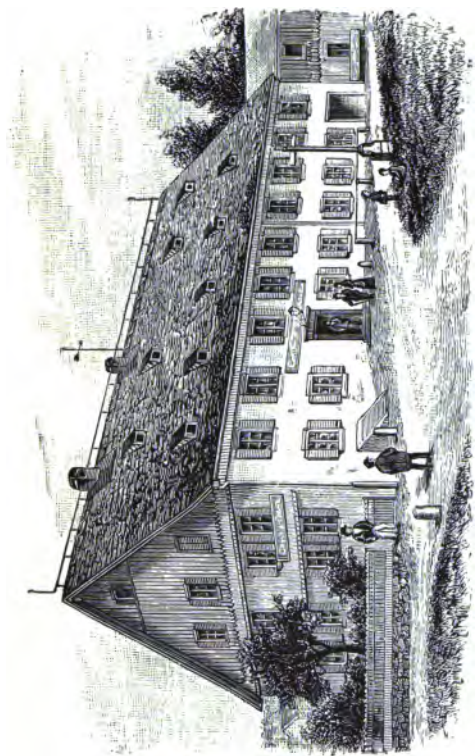
and cultivated, there dark with pine woods ; villages, looking calm and happy, basked in the sunlight. Presently the cool surface of the Titisee, one of the Black Forest lakes, came into view. In a few moments we had pulled up at the inn, for the sake of a rest and a short row upon the water.

It was a small lake, long and narrow, surrounded by hills ; sombre firs interspersing broad patches of bright green. To the right a stony, barren height stood out in strange contrast with its fertile surroundings. Houses were dotted about, and the blue peat smoke curled upwards in picturesque contrast with the dark background. Trees fringing the borders of the water threw upon it their shadows. It was certainly one of the prettiest lakes in the Black Forest. Not the gloom and sombre depth, the intense solitude and romantic reputation of the Mummelsee ; not, like that lake, found after much toiling up a mountain side, reposing out of the world and above the world. But the Titisee is surrounded by charming country, and after a long succession of hills and plains, valleys and

ravines, this calm little sheet of water is a grateful break in the monotony of a day's journey.

A boy paddled me about in a punt; for there was something peculiar in the current of the water or the construction of the boat, and it was not worth while wasting the precious moments at one's disposal in endeavouring to discover why it *would* go round and round in any hands but those of the little fellow who had learned the secret of its navigation. This lake, too, has the reputation of being charmed. Those who dive into its depths are said to hear all sounds upon the road, far and near, reproduced in the romantic form of bells.

A fellow pilgrim, who had spent several days at the inn, said he had been very comfortable, and should be sorry when, on the morrow, his time for leaving arrived. He was now waiting for the diligence which would pass presently, intending to go with it as far as Schluchsee or St. Blasien, and walk back, provided he could get an outside place, a matter so uncertain that he gladly accepted a seat which made him independent of the doubtful omnibus.



INN AT SCHLUCHSEE.

It was easy to understand any one's reluctance to leave the Titisee. I was sorry to do so after less than an hour's acquaintance with it. There was a quietness and repose about the place pleasant and refreshing. A few days at the little inn might be very profitably spent, exploring the neighbourhood, paddling about the lake, which is, moreover, well stocked with fish, and enjoying the country walks and short mountain excursions that abound. It was smaller than the inn at Höllsteig, but more cheerful.

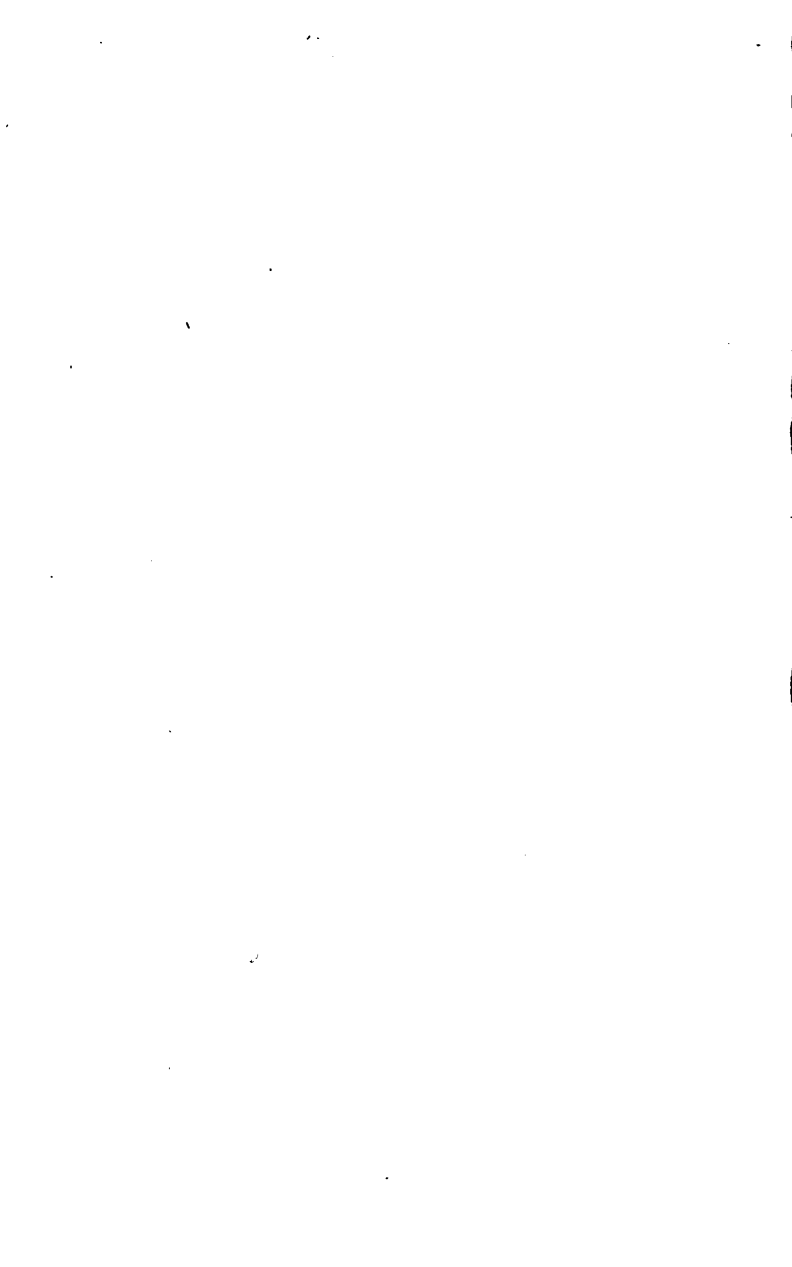
The driver whipped up his horses and away we went, a small crowd upon the steps of the inn looking after us until we were out of sight. There is so little variety in the "daily round" of these remote, wayside houses, that the smallest incident comes in the light of a distraction. It was more than a pleasant drive, yet had no specially remarkable features to leave strong impressions behind it. About one o'clock we reached the inn near the Schluchsee—a lake much larger than the Titisee, but scarcely as picturesque or interesting.

It was a goodly sized inn, with a "dependence," like so many of these inns, in the shape of a second building, and many people seemed staying there. Table d'hôte was just beginning, and one long table was nearly filled, English and French amongst the number. Here, more than at the Titisee or Höllsteig, people appear to make long sojourns. No doubt it is a pleasant change from the outside world. You are far enough away from any town to make a feeling of rest and repose inevitable. The surrounding country is very lovely, and there are the attractions of the lake, which, like the Titisee, is well stocked with fish. The walks and excursions in the neighbourhood are sufficient to give fresh variety and interest to each day. The village is small and quiet, and, as the country people would say, not of much account; and its church is not by any means an eighth wonder of the world.

Presently we strolled down hill to the lake, intending to disport thereon. But the boat-keeper was away, and had maliciously locked up the oars, and it was far too great a struggle and loss of time to go back to the inn for redress.



SCHLUCHSEE.



So we quietly sauntered by the side of the lake, under the shadow of the pine trees that grew down to the water's edge ; admired its beauty, though, after all, it was not so very striking, at least from this particular point of view. Admired, too, the coolness and contrivance of a tourist, evidently walking through the country, who had laid his knapsack upon the ground, and having slung a net between two trees, was lying at ease therein, reading some favourite volume, and luxuriating in the shade of the firs, which kept out so well the heat and glare of the afternoon sun.

Back to the inn at length, where a fresh carriage had to be taken for St. Blasien. But we were not far on the road when my "compagnon de voyage" for the time being, finding the way longer than he had anticipated, or rather that the day had flown more quickly (you cannot waste time at tables d'hôte, and saunter about pleasant lakes, however delightful it all may be, without finding that the shadows will begin to lengthen before you are prepared for them), decided to turn back in order to reach

the Titisee before nightfall—a feat he certainly never accomplished. I continued my way with no other society at command than that of the civil driver.

From this point, on entering the Schwarzthald, a romantic and beautiful valley, the scenery became once more especially grand and striking. Hills, covered with deep dark pines, stretched upwards on either side, and the road, winding amongst them, and overshadowed by them, extended for a considerable distance. At length, between two ranges of hills, right before us, but so far off as to look like a dream, there was suddenly disclosed the loveliest view of the Alps ever seen. It appeared less a vision of earth than of heaven opened to mortal eyes; snow mountains so distant, so lofty, as to be in the very heaven itself; a part of the pure ethereal blue in which they seemed to repose. The declining sun flushed them with a celestial rosy red. Softened by distance, and enveloped by a very slight haze that increased their beauty by half veiling it, one could only think of them as dream mountains.

The fleeting character of the vision, and its suddenness—I had not been thinking of the Alps, and was not aware that they would appear from any point of the road—perhaps added no little to its charm, and to the after remembrance. It was an unusually fortunate vision, too. The Alps had been visible only twice in six weeks, and were now seen at the right and exact moment. Ten minutes earlier they would not have been bathed in that rosy light which has no comparison, and cannot really be described ; the flush of declining sunlight, which comes so suddenly, departs as soon ; and ten minutes later—for we stopped and saw the vision to the end—all had disappeared. It was as if the gates of heaven had rolled back and closed-in the glory, leaving the world outside to darkness and melancholy.

Soon after this we commenced a steep descent, still with the pine woods all about us. The road wound round in a deep valley, where, at the bottom, a noisy river ran its course : down, down until we reached the level. Then the great dome of the church of St. Blasien reared its ponderous

head, as if it wanted to rival the hills in size ; the village opened up ; we passed through an archway leading to the Hotel St. Blasien ; and the day's journey was at an end.

No spot in the Black Forest strikes the traveller with greater surprise than St. Blasien. Here, buried from the world, surrounded by high mountains pine-clad to their summit, of the utmost depth and gloom, stands what was once an enormous Benedictine monastery. It is a wonderful building, apparently of endless extent ; with long, dreary passages and great, old-fashioned, strangely handsome and wonderfully carved staircases. In the building itself, where once the monks were wont to do prayers and penance, and go through the daily routine of monastic life, is now heard the sound of machinery. On entering you are astonished at the endless rows of spinning jennies, the army of men and women full of business and activity ; and you almost fancy that instead of being in the Black Forest you have suddenly been transported into the very heart of a modern Manchester.

Nothing can be more at variance with the old monastic building, with the sombre, majestic hills enshrouding the place, than the sound, rush, and look of all this rattling, roaring iron-work. Almost it seems to desecrate a spot round which, in spite of time, chance, and change, there still lingers an atmosphere of the religious life so long contained within its walls. The very windows, almost countless in number, with their iron bars, bear silent witness to the dead past—and past for ever.

Most unusual sight of all, is the great dome rising like a small St. Paul's, in strange, incongruous contrast with the hills, covering an immense rotunda that was once the church, built in 1786 after the model of the Pantheon; to-day, in the hands of workmen, undergoing a state of transformation. Walking through all the dirt and débris to the great doors beyond, I found myself in a handsome Grecian building that is now the church. Great pillars supporting galleries, and a remarkable altar-piece, a tryptich, of the Ascension, St. Blasius on one side, St. Fridolin on the other.

St. Blasien is much frequented in summer by Germans, and has the reputation of being especially healthy. There are numerous excursions to be made in the neighbourhood, and excellent fishing in the Alb. Wherever a monastery has existed it may be taken for granted that good fishing is not far off. But the hotel was not comfortable. The manager was civil and obliging enough, but it is almost worth while to record that his clerk was amongst the most disagreeable of men in the whole Duchy of Baden.

For my own part, buried here so deep down in the mountains, I could not fancy St. Blasien an especially pleasant or healthy place for a long sojourn. Far more so was the village of Höchenschwand, an hour's walk and more from hence, a long continuous ascent. It is one of the highest villages in the Forest, nearly 3500 feet above the sea level, and is perched on the very summit of the mountain.

I performed the pilgrimage one evening in the hope of seeing the sunset and the view, and failed in both. There is a large hotel at

Höchenschwand, better looking in every respect than the inn at St. Blasien, and evidently much more comfortable and well appointed. Here, too, you can breathe ; you are not oppressed by sun and mountains ; the air is light, pure, and invigorating ; the views are glorious. On the one side all the wooded heights around St. Blasien, so gloomy, so dark, so grand and beautiful ; on the other, vast plains, looking over into Switzerland and Italy ; distant mountains, including the Algäu and Vorarlberg, and the whole chain of the Alps. The view at sunset, I was told, is sometimes too beautiful for description to paint or imagination to realize.

So, as far as that went, I had my walk for nothing. But I had had my glimpse of the Alps on the day that I had first come to St. Blasien : a second view could not have been more exquisite, might have been less so ; and on the whole I hardly knew whether to rejoice or lament that this evening everything was shut out. But I felt that any one wanting rest, repose, and bracing air, would find it at Höchenschwand in no slight measure. It seemed the

very place to restore the nervous system and give back life and health to an invalid.

As to St. Blasien, it would not have been possible to stay there long. Grand and beautiful as were the pine hills, one felt too much buried in them, too much oppressed by them. And there was nothing in the hotel itself to tempt one to remain, whilst the book-keeper was enough to hasten one's departure. Perhaps his nerves wanted a little of the bracing air of Höchenschwand. The season was nearly over at St. Blasien ; one carriage load rapidly succeeded another in departing ; there had been weeks and weeks of hard work and dry book-keeping. One is willing to make excuses. As the doctor at Gastein once said in his quaint way : "Inexplicable qualities are always a sure sign of hidden malady."

But rest and repose and holiday come to most of us. "Tout vient à qui sait attendre." A few days after I left St. Blaisen, the last account in the ledger had been crossed off, and the shutters of the hotel were closed until the advent of another season.

CHAPTER VI.

ST. BLASIEN — ALBTHAL — ALBBRÜCK — BRENNET — WEHR—
HASSEL—LAUFENBURG ON THE RHINE—HOTEL SOOLBAD
—SCHAFFHAUSEN.

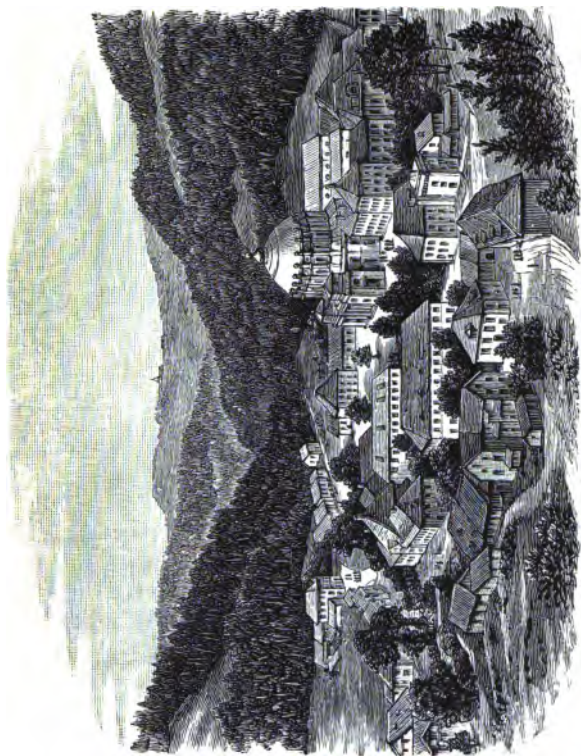
I WAS at St. Blasien. I wished to see the Albthal and the Wehrthal, two valleys of the “highest consideration,” as I had been informed by one who had seen them and knew them well ; yet I had arranged to be at Schaffhausen on a given day. How was this to be done ?

“There is nothing for it,” said the amiable book-keeper, “but to do those valleys, return here, and then go on to Schaffhausen.”

Mistaken advice, followed for want of knowing better ; leading to very much unnecessary trouble and loss of time, and ending in a wild-goose chase after the picturesque. The wild-

goose chase, however, was not the fault of the advice, but of the weather. Furthermore, the hotel people consented to take charge of a small portmanteau ; having to return to St. Blasien in three or four days, it was unnecessary to drag it about the country ; but, on returning, they demanded half price for a room for each day's absence. A mild protest against this extortion was received, metaphorically speaking, with the thunders of Jove ; and, having a wholesome if not cowardly horror of tempests, a weak submission was an inevitable consequence.

At two o'clock, one lovely afternoon, the diligence started for Albbrück. Remembering that in the Black Forest possession of the outside place forms not only nine, but the whole ten points of the law, I was on the spot twenty minutes before the time. There was but one outside seat on this vehicle besides the driver ; or, perhaps two might manage to shake down with a great deal of clever packing and contriving. It stood in the middle of the road, the horses, as yet, not put to. I took the seat at once, and became absorbed in a book,



ST. BLASIEN.

feeling, nevertheless, the cynosure of neighbouring and inquisitive eyes.

To the right the great dome reared its ponderous head ; the noise of the rattling machinery in the once beautiful and vast monastery might be heard like the rushing of distant waters ; the hills, with their green slopes or dark pine forests, rose on all sides ; clefts and passes opened up here and there, leading out into the world or yet further into the mountains. The sun distributed his rays with a dazzling heat that was fast converting this coveted outside seat into a fiery furnace. One counted the moments when we should be in motion, rising out of this " deep depression."

Ten minutes before the time, three Germans came strolling down the road. The world itself might have belonged to them ; the diligence at least they made sure of. When they saw the outside place already in possession of the enemy, nothing could equal their astonishment. They stood in various attitudes expressive of their moods, and in a series of asides abused the world in general. That a mere Englishman

should have the presumption to take the place they, Germans as they were, had marked out for themselves, was a crime for which not even a Pope's indulgence could make atonement.

One of the trio was so overcome that he brought out a huge flask of kirschwasser, capacious enough to have satisfied a giant's thirst, wherewith to drown his indignation, and using it too roughly in the excitement of the moment, it broke in twain. Having personally reduced the contents to one-half, this was handed to the coachman (the horses were put to by this time and the courier was on his box), who disposed of the remainder so promptly that I trembled for our safety in passing precipices and rocky tunnels. With a few final sarcasms, the three Germans entered the diligence, and we started. Their intention had been to pack themselves two on the box and one on the top of the vehicle.

Away, out of quaint, curious St. Blasien—if the earth has round corners this is one of them ; away, beside the running stream, past the benign figure of St. Blasius, in the act of ad-

ministering a perpetual benediction upon a fountain of healing waters. Sweeping round the road, we were soon launched upon the Albthal. Blue skies and sunshine flooded our path. This, so far, was promising. The rippling water and waving, rustling trees sang so sweet a song that it all aroused a delight and a sense of happiness beyond the power of words.

One pitied the three Germans, and evidently they pitied themselves. For, suddenly, there was an energetic tapping at the window, a peremptory demand for a halt. The diligence pulled up, and out stepped one of the trio. Next he managed to scramble on to the roof, and, disposing himself amongst the luggage like a bale of merchandise, settled down into a broad, visible contentment.

Some twenty minutes elapsed, and another urgent summons from the interior brought us to a second halt. Number two of the trio now came out and joined his friend upon the roof. Again we went on for some distance, when number three plucking up courage, beat a tattoo that brought us to a standstill, and out he came

likewise. Would he, too, climb the roof? and, if so, would the roof bear the strain? Not at all. With profuse apologies, but in a very matter-of-fact way, and without waiting for permission, he sat himself down on the box. I never knew how it was managed, but henceforth I envied the two amongst the luggage upon the top: at least they had breathing room. As ill luck would have it, he was unusually stout; if the two already lawfully occupying the box had not been after the pattern of Pharaoh's lean kine, the consequences would have been a precipitate descent into the abyss on our right.

The Germans, now in a state of bliss, were as polite as lately they had been sarcastic. But they were not yet disposed of: the end had not come.

Still I was glad they had turned outside, and was willing to endure the discomfort of close packing. In the enjoyment of great pleasures one likes to feel that all who possibly can, have their just share and proportion. The scenery was growing magnificent, even sublime, but from the interior of a coach very much of it

would have been lost. As it was, the two Germans perched on the roof had decidedly the best of it. They knew it, and gave way to their spirits accordingly.

It was indeed a glorious drive ; a succession of views far grander than anything I had yet seen in the Black Forest. Travelling onwards, it reminded one of some of the best parts of the Tyrol, with all the romantic beauty and grandeur of that loveliest, most romantic of countries. George Sand thoroughly appreciated the Tyrol, and looked upon it as a spot especially favoured in creation. "*Voir le Tyrol, et mourir,*" is the burden of some of the pages in her "*Lettres d'un Voyageur.*" And she makes one of her characters remark to a fellow traveller who is praising up some favourite spot, "Ah, madame, vous n'avez pas vu le Tyrol."

All who know the Tyrol can imagine for themselves the loving, longing tone with which the words would be uttered ; the tremulous regret that would linger in the voice of the poor traveller, with back turned, perhaps for ever, upon those lovely and beloved haunts. Home

for ever must be home ; but when it is cast amongst all that is beautiful and romantic in nature—who then can measure the affection that home inspires ? the impression it leaves behind in the after years when perhaps that home has grown into nothing but a recollection and a name, and the forms that once flitted to and fro and made it a heaven upon earth have passed into the land of shadows ?

To-day as our road ascended, the valley deepened into a precipitous ravine, covered with ferns, bramble, and tangle ; everything that was wild and spontaneous in nature. Far down, ran the frothy river Alb, here and there spanned by bridges of dark gray stone. Every now and then an exclamation would burst forth from enraptured lips on the top of the coach. Say what you will of the phlegmatic temperament of the Germans, at least they have an ardent appreciation of the beauties of earth. These raise them to the highest point of enthusiasm, where most Englishmen would gaze with a calm approval ; dignified, it may be admitted, but cold, very suggestive of indifference.

Looking back upon the road we had travelled, the valley fell away in folds of magnificent verdure, fold upon fold, slope beyond slope. In the far distance, mountains bounded the horizon, faint, misty, melting into mere dreams, black with pine forests. Every turn opened up fresh beauties. Here and there we passed a village, perched on the very summit of some mountain height. One of these the post-boy pointed to as his home. He had not been to it for four year, or seen any of his people, although constantly passing almost within sight of them.

They have no holidays, these diligence drivers ; but they have hard, constant work ; and for pay, their food and about enough money to keep them in tobacco. Clothes, food, lodging—all of the roughest description, the latter merely a shake down in the stable loft—are provided for them ; but of actual money they earn scarcely anything. The conductors of the diligences, on the other hand, are a superior set of men ; they are well dressed and well paid. As these have the responsibilities of mail-bags, luggage, and parcels, this distinction is necessary. On

the part of the traveller, a gratuity to the post-boy is a boon well bestowed—though no one but an Englishman ever thinks of giving it him ; but upon the conductor it would be unnecessarily bestowed. Some, indeed, will not condescend to accept it.

In winter the coach is often turned into a sledge, and travels day after day in a country white with snow. The roads are iron-hard with frost ; the trees glisten in the sun ; the cold is so intense that the driver cannot feel the reins. Often he has to trust to the horses alone. An exquisite picture no doubt, but for the poor post-boy too severe an experience to possess any charms.

To-day there was nothing of all this. It was summer ; the air was soft and warm ; the sun, if anything, too powerful ; there was life in all nature ; health in the very air we breathed. The road was cut out of the mountain side, and occasional short tunnels were pierced through the solid rock.

The gorge twisted and turned, displaying all kinds of angles and abrupt curves, covered with

the wildest, most romantic verdure. The coach dashed along at the very edge of the precipice. We gazed into great depths, a billowy ocean of forest trees and wild heath-land. We soared above the world ; and yet, all the time, far above us towered the mountains right and left. Once or twice—strange sight in this most remote, most lonely valley—we passed a great cotton factory, which sends forth its work into the gayest capitals of Europe.

Half-way on our journey we stopped for ten minutes to rest the horses. The inn overhung the steep sides of the ravine ; the hills, towering above, overshadowed it. The old stone bridge beside it spanned the chasm and led to the cotton mill hard by. A caravan had encamped at the foot of the bridge, on the green mountain slope. Its occupants might have belonged to a tribe of Spanish gipsies ; perhaps did so. Dark, flashing eyes, and rich warm complexions had they—a man and a woman, as handsome as they could well be, and a couple of children ; one, with military ardour, was playing upon a drum, the other fondled a great dog, that submitted to

have his tail pulled and his throat strangled with the most resigned air in the world.

There was something strangely interesting about these gipsies : an air of refinement altogether absent from the gipsies that haunt our woods and commons and solitary highways. They might have been termed high-caste gipsies. It might be, had their pedigree been traced, that the blood of many successive generations ran in their veins. Possibly they possessed hereditary rights and claims ; in the far distant past, the boast of heraldry or the pomp of power. Nature has strange freaks, and time and chance bring about marvellous revolutions. We all know the story of the common Spanish soldier who fell in love with his laundress, and whose hand was declined by the aspiring dame. In course of years that same soldier became king of Spain, and the lady, bewailing her lost chance, sent him a touching message : " Since she could no longer hope for the honour of being his wife, might she be allowed the privilege of doing his washing ? "

But the gipsies, the inn, and all its romantic surroundings had to be left, and the journey



IN THE BLACK FOREST.

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continued towards Albbrück. A diligence is almost as merciless as time and tide, unless you yourself are in a hurry ; then it is wonderful how leisurely it will take its time. We went on and on through the wildest and most romantic scenery. At length the descent towards Albbrück commenced ; the magnificent grandeur of the Albthal was left behind. But I thought then that I had seen nothing in the Black Forest to compare with this drive, and I think so still. Whatever else is neglected by the traveller, the Albthal assuredly must be seen. It will leave an impression behind it that will not soon pass away.

We descended rapidly to the level of the plain and to Albbrück ; a small manufacturing place, quietly busy, surrounded by green pastures, more or less marshy, through which the Alb flowed onward to the Rhine. That classic river, with its green, swift-flowing waters was stretched before us. Immediately beyond rose a chain of hills clothed with vineyards, villages here and there presenting a picture of quiet Swiss life. Here the Rhine divides Switzerland from Germany ; a fair boundary mark sur-

rounded by an atmosphere of romantic legends without end.

The diligence crossed over the rails and drew up at the railway inn ; small, unpretending, but not uncomfortable quarters, kept by two brothers, who do their best for their visitors, and do it in a pleasant way. Here I was to take train for Brennet, the station for the Wehrathal. It was five o'clock, and the train would not start before eight. Thus there was time enough and to spare to explore the neighbourhood.

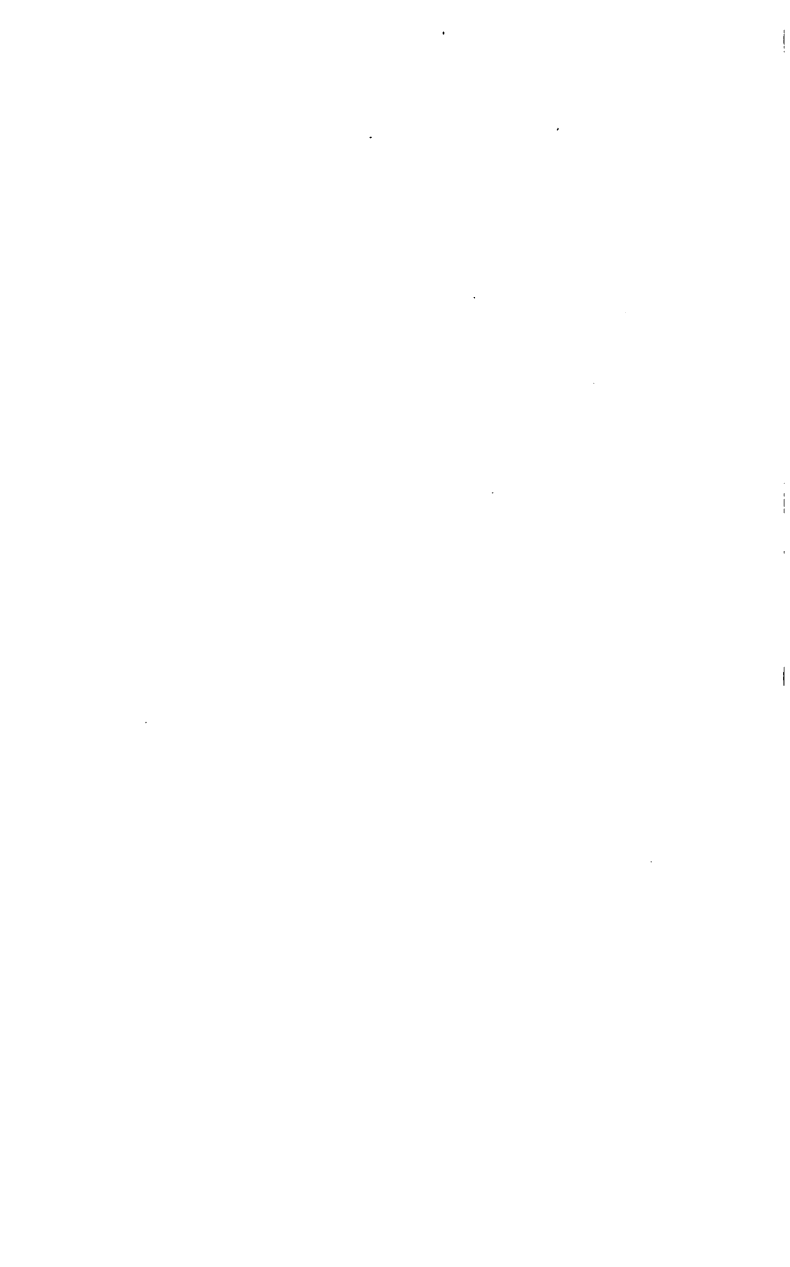
A pleasant walk, though there was little to be seen. A stroll through a quiet country district ; a few old cottages scattered about and forming a village ; the inhabitants, many of them at their suppers, sitting at round wooden tables near wide-open doors. A savoury mess sent forth its odourous steam into the air. They live simply, these people, like most of their class ; poor, yet not in poverty ; having enough with their bit of land, their garden, and their cow, added to their daily toil, to make both ends meet.

For them, sufficient unto the day is the evil



THE ALBTHAL.

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thereof ; the morrow takes care of itself ; their wants are so few that what would be improvidence with some is not so in their case. These remote villagers are a law unto themselves, and cannot be judged by the ordinary rules of life. With few advantages and no opportunities, they are, in a sense, dependent as children. The HAND that marks the sparrow fall, seems to watch over them with special care. The age of miracles is past and it no longer rains manna from the skies, but these poor villagers do not fail in their daily bread.

I felt a strong temptation to go in to these cottagers at their supper, and for a moment make one with them ; note the old picturesque rooms, black with age or smoke, or both ; the rude, quaint furniture ; the rugged fare and simple lives of these unworldly, honest folk. But a sense of intrusion, often misplaced, a wonder how one's entrance will be received, often causes us to neglect opportunities it would have been wise to make the most of. So I passed by the open doors and found myself presently on the banks of the flowing Rhine.

The river had not been so swollen for some years, and was rushing quickly on its course. To-night its waters were a pale, beautiful, transparent green. On the opposite banks, the heights, bearing vineyards, rose abruptly. A few houses of the Swiss village almost overhung the water, and cast their reflections thereon. The air swarmed with insects.

It was a calm, singularly beautiful evening. The heat of the day was over ; the declining sun flushed the sky ; all was peace and harmony. The very insects, countless myriads though they were, whirled about without sound, and apparently with no unfriendly feeling towards mankind.

Leaving all this, at length, and making slow way towards the inn, in a vain endeavour to spin out the time profitably as well as pleasantly, suddenly I came upon a lady, evidently a stranger also, and in search of something. Her eyes glanced right and left, and she too seemed interested in the cottages and the lives they sheltered. Then she stopped, and, being German, of course spoke excellent English.

"Can you tell me," she said, "where the Alb flows into the Rhine? I so much want to see it. I looked about for it this afternoon, but could not find the spot, and somehow I did not care to ask the villagers—the place seems so forlorn and desolate; it gave me a kind of lost, half-frightened feeling. It must be somewhere about here."

It was the very thing I had been looking at for the last half-hour. So I turned back with her down the road; then to the left past some cottages, where an old man and a boy (their supper ended) were sawing wood and singing a strange, weird song as they worked. Yet a little way over rough ground, where all trace of road had disappeared, and there was the little river yielding up its life to the greater. My newly found companion looked on with evident interest.

"I quite love the little Alb," she said, after a long pause, given up to gazing and cogitating. "For the last six weeks I have been staying at Höchenschwand—quite in sight of the Alb—for the sake of the mountain air. I spent one

season at Davos, but the air of Höchenschwand seems to me almost as good as that. You are more quiet, too, and less shut in by the mountains."

"But, on the other hand, is Höchenschwand not too dull and lonely for a long sojourn?" I inquired. "It seemed so, the night I went up to it."

"It would be very dull," returned the *fräulein*—for such she evidently was—"but we happened to have pleasant people staying in the house. Two old generals amused me very much, one English, the other German. Neither could speak a word of the other's language, and their efforts to compare notes and tell anecdotes were most amusing. Often I would translate for them, but I was not always at hand, and occasionally I would come in to find both red in the face with trying in vain to keep up a conversation. They were charming old men."

"Do you know any other part of the Black Forest?" I asked.

"Yes," she replied. "Before going to Höchenschwand I was staying at the inn at Schluchsee.

I did not like it. They put me into the 'dependence' over the stables. It was very disagreeable, and the horses at night made so much noise that I could not sleep. The first day, when my maid was unpacking, a servant came in and said, 'You need not trouble to do that; no one ever stays more than one night in this room.' "

"And did you stay?"

"In that room? Only the one night. I assure you I did not make the exception. I could not stand it. Altogether, I was glad to leave Schluchsee. It was so uncomfortable for my maid, too, that I sent her right back to Frankfort."

"And you liked Höchenschwand?"

"Oh, very much. The place was so lovely, the air so bright, the Hotel Maier so comfortable. Everything was done to make one's stay agreeable. Madame Maier, too, was very nice. She is the niece of the great painter Winterhalter, and I believe he left her much of his property. He himself belonged to Menzenschwand; but he loved this place, and he wanted

others to come and love it too. Yet I was very nearly never getting to Höchenschwand.

"How was that?" was the natural inquiry.

"They wanted to charge me so much for a carriage from Schluchsee that I would not pay it. I said I would take the diligence instead. I requested the conductor to put me down at a particular spot where I could get some one to take my luggage to Höchenschwand. He replied in the rudest and roughest way that he was not obliged to give up my luggage before we got to St. Blasien, and he should do as he pleased. Of course, he wanted a bribe. Finally, he put me down, bag and baggage, in the middle of the high-road, at the most lonely part of the whole journey, and left me standing there, no creature, no help within sight or sound."

"An unpleasant position," I remarked, sympathetically. "That conductor ought to have been reported at head-quarters. How did you manage?"

"Fortunately, a man came up, who carried my box for me," she replied, "and I contrived to carry my own bag. But was not that a most

unpleasant position for what you English call an 'unprotected female'—left in the middle of a high-road with her luggage, in an unknown, unfrequented country, perfectly forlorn and abandoned? I never felt so hopeless and so miserable in my life."

"Yet is it not singular," I ventured to remark, "that in our most hopeless situations, something invariably turns up which exactly fits into our necessity?"

"I have always found it so," returned my companion. "And it has often struck me that if we possessed supernatural vision and knowledge, we should find that our extremities have all been foreseen and their remedies provided, even the small trifles and perplexities of everyday life; for our lives, after all, are made up of trifles. I remember a sentence in one of your English divines with which I was much struck at the time I read it; it was this: 'Man's extremity is God's opportunity.' I have never forgotten it, though I forget who wrote it."

Thus talking, we found ourselves once more at the railway inn, where the three Germans were

comfortably seated at table, taking refreshment. There was yet an hour to the departure of the train, and it was not an unwise way of passing the time. One's destination that night was a small country inn, mysteriously obscure as to all information that could be gained concerning it. When I found that the three Germans were bound for the same place, I began to fear that even accommodation might fail.

After I had been seated a few minutes, they held a short conversation together in solemn undertones. Then the spokesman of the party turned to me.

"We sleep at Brennet to-night," said he.

"Very good," I replied.

"Are you going to do the same?" he inquired.

"Yes."

"To-morrow we are going up the Wehrthal to Schönau," he continued.

"Very good," I replied once more.

"And you?" he asked insinuatingly.

"I am going to follow the same route."

"We are going up the Belchen," he went on, extending his confidence.

It was very kind of him to be so communicative, but the information was not interesting. I was not going up the Belchen. I saw, however, that he was leading up to something, and the next remark brought it out.

"We are going to take the diligence up the Wehrathal to-morrow, and if there are only three outside seats, we intend to have them."

What could be said to this very impertinent, very ungentlemanly speech? To resent it would be humiliating, and the days of pistols and coffee are over. So merely replying that I hoped the diligence would give room for all, I became absorbed in the baked meats on the table, and consigned the Germans to oblivion.

The train arrived, and in due course we reached Brennet—and a pitch dark platform. What had come to the night and the stars? The first person I happened to accost was the landlord of the little inn, looking out for passengers. Without his help it would hardly have been possible to find one's way, even across the road, so inky black and bewildering had the night become. As it was, I was safely within

the inn, quietly shut into a little sanctum before the train had well left the platform, and long before the three Germans (who were no more to be got rid of than the slippers in the Eastern tale) had appeared upon the scene.

In less than three minutes there suddenly burst forth a storm of rain and hail, thunder and lightning, the fury of which could scarcely be greater. Yet half an hour ago the sky had been calm and mild and cloudless. It is these storms that the vine-growers dread so much. Any one hearing the tempest that night could understand the dread, realize the destruction. I thought of the vineyards seen only that evening on the banks of the Rhine in all their beauty and promise, and wondered how much of that beauty and promise would be lost by the morning.

Alas! when the morning came the rain was still falling in torrents, without apparent hope of abatement. The Germans were up and dressed, had breakfasted, and departed in a hired conveyance, all in the space of a quarter of an hour. They meant to post on to Wehr and catch the diligence. But, on arriving at

Wehr, they found that the diligence was a myth. We had all been misinformed. So, disgusted with the weather and the phantom coach, and the uncertainty of human affairs, they altered their plans and posted on to Zell, there to take train; giving up the Wehrathal, Schönau, and the Belchen. Thus, after leaving Brennet, the slippers were finally disposed of: I saw the Germans no more.

The omnibus for Wehr started about seven o'clock from the Brennet post-office, a five minutes' walk from the inn. The rain was coming down in torrents, and in torrents we reached Wehr. To attempt to go up the Wehrathal were folly and madness. There was nothing for it but to put up at the little Hotel Brügger, and hope for better weather.

It was all very well to hope; the better weather never came. For three days the skies wept. It was a small country place, very little more than a village. Between the showers I wandered up and down the one long street; gazed at the people, who gazed in return; watched the men threshing out the grain with

their flails, the rhythm of their beat falling hour after hour monotonously on the ear. From dawn to mid-day, and mid-day to sunset they worked away, scarcely ever resting, except now and then to note with amusement the curiosity of a stranger, and good-humouredly bid him join in the work.

To vary the occupation and pass the lingering hours, I strolled through a picturesque but decidedly muddy country road to the village of Hasel. Here, at the inn, a boy, with a key and a bundle of torches, soon made himself ready to act as guide to the famous stalactite cavern, which reaches to an impenetrable distance, and is said to possess the somewhat unpleasant curiosity of white flies and blind white spiders.

A walk of half a mile through wet fields and verdant banks. The wonderful spot reached, we equipped ourselves in a becoming dress (these disguises always are becoming) kept for such occasions in a locked-up room, and were soon groping down a long flight of stairs into the singular interior. Had we been met by bogies they would have flown back affrighted. Our

torches threw a weird gleam about the cavern, sufficient to make darkness visible, and enable us to see here and there a projecting point of rock, just after it had half cracked our heads with the most friendly intentions. Our own forms and faces stood out grotesquely. We might have been bogies ourselves, or demons belonging to unmentionable regions.

It was interesting as a stalactite cavern, a work of the ages. The guide explained everything very intelligently, and showed some sense of grim humour in his quaint remarks. Of course there was the lake, the organ, the pulpit, the death's head and the living face, and a number of other natural devices. Some were very good; others, perhaps, might have been better if turned upside down. On the whole, the cave is worth visiting if it falls in one's way and disturbs no settled plans. Under other circumstances, it may just as well be passed over, and none need very much regret the omission. For purposes of observation or zoological study, it may be of some value, for it dates back to a far distant past; but mere sentiments of

curiosity or gratification will in all probability be met by a slight feeling of disappointment.

The return to Wehr, over the fields, afforded one the mild excitement of picking a way through pools and acres of mud—a short cut to the village, and hardly worse than the road to Hasel had been. The day passed on to night ; it would be out of the natural order of things not to do so ; and the sympathetic landlady prophesied that the morrow would prove everything fair skies could make it.

We were a small weather-bound party, with no human element of discord, as good fortune would have it. At night, when the lamp was lighted in the little *salle*, the party was increased by a few neighbours, who dropped in to play cards and drink mild beer. Conspicuous among them was a "*Herr Baron*." The landlady gave him his full title at every other word, as she sat in a sociable way at the table, looked on at the game, and freely expressed her opinion whenever an interesting point arose ; keeping an eye the while on the glasses, and rising, unbidden, to refill an empty measure with the light, frothy beverage of the country.

The Herr Baron was a model of strength and energy, and would now and then bring down his card upon the table with an emphasis that animated the tumblers. He had a very determined expression of countenance, as befitted a Herr Baron, and a way of speaking that seemed to defy contradiction. Yet, with it all, he was pleasant and unassuming, although from the quiet deference paid him by the rest of the little German assembly, he was evidently much above them in rank. I wondered where he came from, whether he lived in some ancient castle on the hillside, surrounded by woods, shot bears in the winter, and hunted the chamois in summer ; whether his ancestors had once owned and occupied the now ruined castle on the hill behind the inn.

So the night passed, and the next day proved, if anything, worse than the day before. The landlady was no true prophet, and was apologetic as well as sympathizing. The Wehrathal was still an impossibility. The clouds were low, and enwrapped the mountains ; the rain still descended like a deluge ; the little band of weather-

bound travellers consulted the weeping skies, looked mournfully at each other, shook their heads in harmony, and tried to be philosophical.

But all the philosophy in the world could make of Wehr nothing but a dull, tame, and uninteresting place in which to be imprisoned. Every one agreed upon this point, when, night having once more fallen, the small coterie, including the Herr Baron, had again assembled to play cards and drink beer, and chat over the news of the day. Just then the topic in the newspapers was the sad and fluctuating state of President Garfield. There was a division upon the point—one half fearing he would die, the other half assured of recovery. Too soon, alas, all doubt was set at rest.

The next morning those eternally weeping skies were too much for human endurance, or any amount of philosophy. The little band chartered the omnibus to Brennet, and took flight. But for the advice given me at St. Blasien, I might now have gone straight on to Schaffhausen, there quietly to await better days. Instead of this I was compelled to return up the

Albthal in the wind and the rain, the cold and the night, get my luggage, pay my bill, and find that, for all this extra trouble, expense, and discomfort, they had added insult to injury by charging half price for a room simply for taking charge of a small portmanteau.

At Brennet the whole day was before me. It was useless reaching Albbrück before five o'clock, at which hour the diligence started for St. Blasien. So, to break the journey, I stopped half-way at Laufenburg on the Rhine.

It is an old, dilapidated-looking place, quaint and ancient enough to satisfy the most advanced lover of antiquity. The Rhine rushes through the old covered bridge at express speed, as if it would hurl it to destruction. Houses that look as if they dated back to the flood overhang the river, and make the place at once old-world, curious, and picturesque. They appear grey, poverty-stricken, abandoned, but are not so in reality. The people who inhabit them have all they need, and perhaps a little to spare. Just below the bridge the Rhine is at its very narrowest. The water rushes between great rocks

in an unceasing torrent with a force at once terrific and startling.

There is a very good hotel at Laufenburg—the Hotel Soolbad—and it seemed under excellent management. It overlooks the Rhine, and in summer is frequented by people who go there for the salt baths. Its situation is excessively picturesque, and pleasant walks abound. The Rhine was so swollen that the gardens were swamped, boats were turned upside down, and altogether the place looked very much out of its normal condition. The waters were in the cellars ; and to-morrow, said the manager, almost with tears in his eyes, his dining-room would be flooded, unless they began to subside.

The table d'hôte consisted of a cluster of ancient but no doubt amiable ladies, the remnant of the season, who having taken a course of the baths, had, let us hope, benefited thereby. They spoke in high terms of the manager, and regretted that the hotel was not properly known and patronized. It certainly seemed a very pleasant place in which to spend a few weeks, and, with the old ladies at the dinner-table,

I thought it a pity that it was not more known.

Albbrück. It was still raining hard when the diligence started for St. Blasien at a quarter-past five. But the interior was unendurable, and, defying wind and weather, I took place beside the courier. The grandeur of the drive was conspicuous, in spite of lowering clouds, rain, cold, and thorough discomfort. At the wayside inns the driver was equal to any number of "kirschwassers," and one almost envied him his capacity in this respect. At least, it helped to keep up his animation and his amiability.

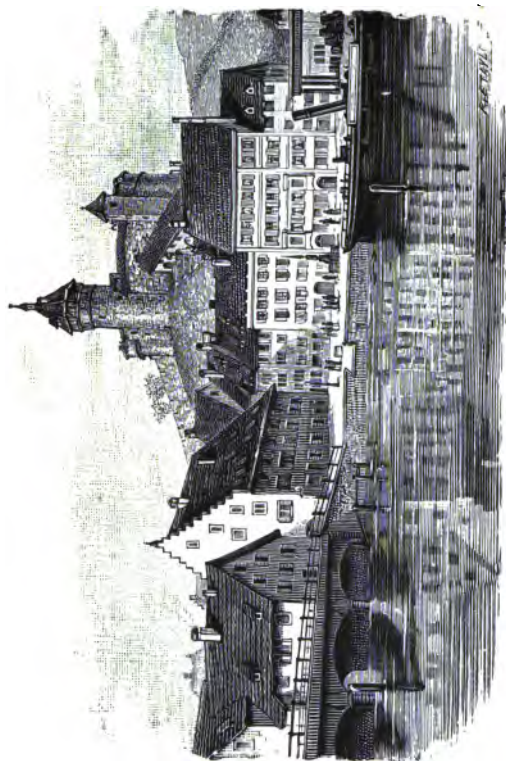
About nine o'clock we reached St. Blasien, cold, wet, and miserable. Was it any wonder that for two pins one could have consigned the givers of bad advice to annihilation? I saw little of St. Blasien on this occasion. Arriving in darkness, before eight o'clock the next morning I had breakfasted, paid the bill, and was, bag and baggage, for the second time on the road to Albbrück.

At Albbrück I took train for Neuhausen. Before that station was reached the capricious

weather had changed. All was once more blue skies and sunshine, and at the Schweizerhof one found rest and quiet for the Sunday.

Schaffhausen is a short, pleasant walk from Neuhausen ; but the hotel omnibus will take all to it who are lazily inclined. It is an antiquated town, with much that is curious and picturesque about it. Every one stops at Neuhausen, but none should neglect at least one visit to the old place. The houses overlooking the river are a picture in themselves ; and there are ancient buildings, monuments, and fountains that have seen the rise and fall of many generations.

It was no longer the Black Forest, but a new country, new scenes. Below the Schweizerhof at Neuhausen flowed the green waters of the Rhine, a deep, swift stream ; before it were the grand falls of Schaffhausen, a wide mass of seething foam and rushing, tumbling water. Across the Rhine stretched the chain of the snowy Alps, far, far into the distance, and the canopy of blue sky beyond was a fitting background to this more than earthly paradise. Later on, when night had fallen, the moon threw



SCHAFFHAUSEN.



a silvery gleam upon the river, lighting up the falls, and making the whole scene one of enchantment. Nothing could be more lovely, more romantic than the effect, exciting the imagination to the pitch of enthusiasm. Save for the rushing water, the whole surrounding neighbourhood was steeped in silence.

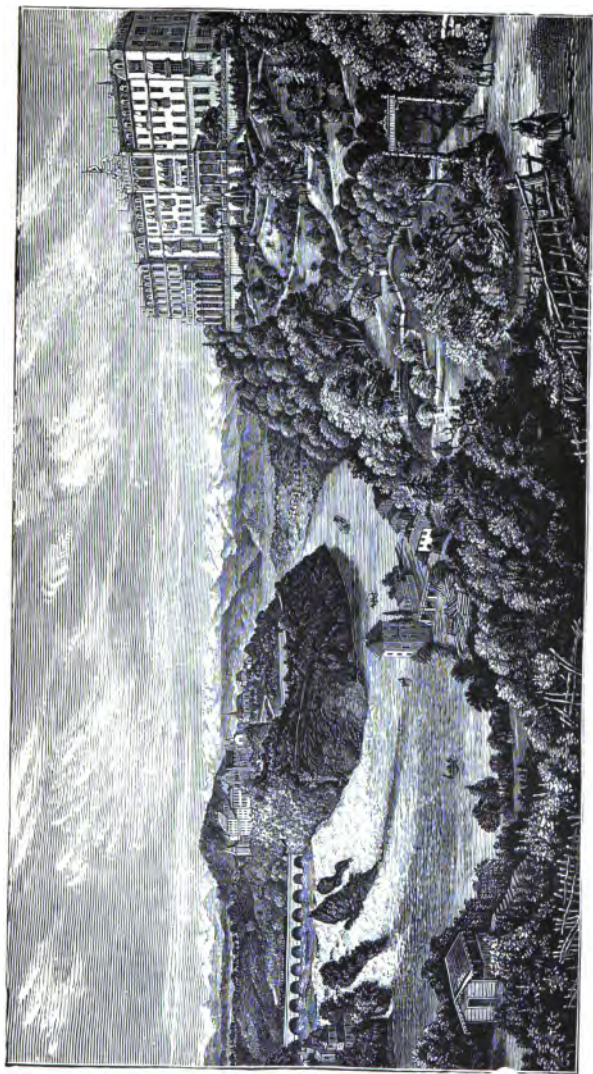
Sunday rose clear and brilliant, one of the hottest days of that summer. From the windows of the hotel one gazed upon a fair Sabbath scene of beauty and romance, the daylight effect upon the mind very different from that of the moonlight. The slopes leading from the hotel to the river were half cultivated, half wild. The hotel itself was excellent, one of its chief points being the pretty girls that waited in the dining-room in the picturesque costumes of the country. They went through their duties with a quietness, a certain grace not easily accounted for. Later on, the landlord explained the mystery.

It was an experiment he had now tried for two seasons, with a success one could very well imagine. These young women were not ordinary servants, and were not so treated by him. None

of them were obliged to go out to service ; some were the daughters of physicians and men in a similar rank of life ; the father of one of them was a chief member of the Senate.

They came to him for two or three months in the year ; came to see a little of life, and to be initiated into the mysteries of house-keeping. Thus when they married they would not be quite ignorant of these important matters. They had their own sitting-room, and their sole duty was to wait in the *salle à manger*. With their rich velvet bodices, gay petticoats, and silver ornaments, they looked wonderfully picturesque. For their services they received, at the end of the season, a sum which served them as pocket-money. Not a few, said the landlord, were reluctant to leave the gay scene for their quiet country homes, when the time came. No doubt to many the comparison was in favour of the hotel.

The landlord, on his side, profited by the arrangement, for he could have found no better plan for adorning his dining-room. It was the picture that remained longest in the mind after





leaving Neuhausen. The large cool room decorated with tropical plants ; its great open windows looking unto the green, sparkling waters of the Rhine, the rushing, wonderful falls of Schaffhausen, the picturesque Schloss Laufen above them ; and, prettiest sight of all, because most human, the maidens that moved about so quietly in their costumes, waiting upon you with so gentle a manner, that they took all hearts captive.

I left it all on the Monday morning to return to the Black Forest. But that return was the beginning of the end. A few more days and the scene would change to a land of small romance and great realities, though, no doubt, possessing special virtues of her own.

And, gentle reader, you, whose patience, I fear, has been taxed in rambling with me about the Black Forest, shall be taxed but little longer. The driest sermon, the dullest page, the longest lane, all have an end. Yet my last days in the Black Forest were not the least enjoyed ; the scenes I passed through not the least worthy of note. It is well that last impressions should

be peculiarly pleasant. They gild all that has gone before, whether of good or ill. The fine sunset of an especially lovely day in our life, lingers long in the memory ; often destined to fade only with life itself.



THE ALBTHAL.

CHAPTER VII.

SCHOPFHEIM—HAUSEN—HEBEL'S HOME—ZELL—SCHÖNAU—
WEHRATHAL—WEHR—TODTNAU—ANGENBACHTHAL.

THE Rhine Falls were left to astonish other eyes and ears with their rush and roar, and once more I was journeying towards the Black Forest, taking a long round, and making yet another violent effort to see the Wehrthal. Success would depend very much upon the elements, but come fair weather or come foul, I had determined to see this much-praised valley. It was a rash resolve; but if it were not for our rash resolves many excellent things in life as well as many foolish ones would never come.

The train made its slow way to Basle; how slow and wearisome only those know who have passed through the experience. Travelling for

pleasure, these frequent stoppages and long halts are endurable ; but to any one hastening on matters of life or death all this delay and loss of time must be torture.

At Basle we changed for the Black Forest. The train was crowded, and passengers were packed together regardless of class or number—not the most comfortable arrangement in the world. The summer manœuvres were going forward, and every station was thronged with noisy Germans ; countrymen dressed in their Sunday best, and looking stiff and uncomfortable ; half of them carrying glaring umbrellas tied round like lettuces. They scrambled blindly into the carriages, and the train groaned with its extra weight. The day was intensely hot and bright, but I had learned wisdom of late, and did not expect too much. There is no mesmerism in these matters. It is said that to wish for a person will often bring him, but is it not so with blue skies.

We reached Schopfheim, a small, industrious manufacturing town. Here I was glad to say good-bye to the train, which continued its slow

way toward Zell, another industrious manufacturing town, overshadowed by the mountains. Zell was nearer my destination, but a fellow traveller (above the Sunday-best and cotton-umbrella order) said there would be greater chance of finding a carriage for Schönauf at Schopfheim than at Zell.

So I alighted ; and the guard, more civil and human than the Schluchsee diligence-conductor had been to the unprotected lady travelling to Höchenschwand, put out my luggage at Schopfheim, in spite of its being labelled for Zell. Next, my fellow traveller piloted me through the not very intricate mazes leading from the station to the inn of the Three Kings, where he seemed quite at home. In a moment the host and hostess bustled out with effusion (they were honest, straightforward folk), and assured me that a horse and carriage, everything the inn contained, was at my disposal.

After this wholesale invitation, it seemed almost ungrateful merely to accept a glass of their country ale and a crust of bread ; certainly it was unremunerative ; but I am bound to say

that an extensive order for ambrosia and nectar could not have been served with more evidence of goodwill. Whilst the carriage was preparing, I strolled out to reconnoitre the town and take its bearings.

It contained nothing remarkable. A small uninteresting place, of no form or shape; no sign of fashion, or of anything beyond trade and very small commerce; nothing old or antiquated about it, except the distant hills—too distant to overshadow the houses or lend them anything of a romantic influence. In a quiet way the people appeared flourishing and industrious. There were no conspicuous signs of poverty; for the bare-legged children, who played in the gutters, and arrested their intense enjoyment of wallowing in the dust of the road to stare after the stranger, were no evidence of anything but the good habits of the country: bare legs and feet and arms, whereby they grew up stout and hardy for the battle of the world.

Before the mild excitement and resources of Schopfheim were exhausted, I perceived at the door of the Three Kings an indescribable vehicle

in readiness. The landlord, a model of patience and good humour, was watching over it with evident pride and affection.

On closer inspection, this wonderful machine turned out to be a kind of Bath chair on a large scale, with a narrow seat in front for the driver and a ledge behind for the luggage. But it was not uncomfortable; and if the state of the springs made it a matter for rejoicing that one's bones are not very easily dislocated, still things might have been worse than they were. The wheels, at least, were round and not square. With the aid of the shaggy but willing quadruped we should gradually make way, and sooner or later reach Schönauf.

So it came to pass. The landlord, with a sort of paternal solicitude, packed me up bag and baggage, gave a proud and parting look to his vehicle and his little horse, wished me a safe journey (I thought I here detected a slight anxiety in his tone, but probably it was fancy), and away we started. The majesty of Phaeton driving his chariot was nothing as compared with our pomp and pride on this occasion.

Nevertheless, it cannot be said that we dashed through the town at headlong speed, scattering people and raising an alarm. The horse, on the contrary, seemed particularly gentle. Evidently his ideas were of a distinguished order, and he felt that a leisurely pace was due to his dignity, and that nothing was more vulgar than to be seen in a hurry. If ever he had had a youth, it must certainly have been in the Middle Ages of the world.

But the evening was especially fine, and our time was our own—carriage, horse, driver, and driven all included : a quartette accountable to no man. Jehu, too, enlivened the journey with sage and intelligent remarks. His wonders about England, and what it could be like, the great city of London with its millions of people—and was it true that its streets were paved with gold ? The anecdotes and histories of his own immediate neighbourhood and its inhabitants, himself included. He, poor fellow, had come down in the world. He had been a gentleman's coachman for many years ; had saved a good bit of money. Then, marrying a wife, he

thought he should like a home of his own, and with his savings set up a café. Alas, he had forgotten that a cobbler should stick to his last, or else he had not seized his fortune at the flood, for in two years all that he possessed was lost. So he had returned to his old occupation, and had come down to the stables of the Three Kings. He had not much hope left for himself, he plaintively said, but he had great hopes that his son would do something in the world, and build up their fortunes once more.

It was a pleasant country drive, calm and placid, nothing wild or great or grand about it. Fields and vineyards and fruit-bearing orchards surrounded us. The mountains were gradually drawing nearer. Presently we turned out of our road to visit Hausen, a small village, and the home of Hebel, the poet ; who, in a lesser degree, was to the people of the Black Forest what Burns was to the Scotch.

This visit left behind it one of the pleasantest impressions the Black Forest gave me. It was a bright, calm evening, and particularly calm and silent was the village. A quaint corner house,

nothing more than a humble cottage, bore an inscription intimating that here for a time had been the poet's home. Across the road was the small church, and under its shadow, guarded by trees, was a monument erected by the people to the poet's memory.

Standing there, this still evening, it all seemed a type of Hebel's life—the quiet fields and fruit-laden orchards ; the grand, surrounding hills in which he often wandered, and from which he must have drawn much of his inspiration ; the running stream on whose borders he would lounge and dream away the hours, and write down his songs as they occurred to him.

It was just the spot for a poet whose tone of mind was calm and smooth-flowing, rather than wild and passionate. And yet, during the time that he lived amongst the poor and, comparatively speaking, ignorant villagers, there must have been for ever in his life an undercurrent of sadness—a feeling of being very much alone in the world ; incapable of being understood and appreciated by his nearest and closest companions ; a constant craving for communion with





a higher order of intelligence and culture, a more elevated social sphere, where the thoughts within him, that had now to be suppressed, might find utterance and response ; a reciprocity of ideas and emotions and intimate companionship that is all in all to some natures, and without which life would have no sunshine and no happiness.

It was doubtless this feeling that made him spend so much of his time wandering about the hills, in silent communion with the Nature he loved so well. Here, at least, there was nothing to jar upon him ; nothing to wound his sensitive spirit ; no rough response where the opposite should have been ; no loud laugh where sympathy was demanded.

We left Hausen to its repose, and went on our way. Soon we passed through Zell, a small, old-fashioned, out-of-the-world spot, with a few tall chimneys and iron works. I thought I had done well to leave the train at Schopfheim and secure a carriage (such a carriage, too!) at the Three Kings. Here, in the valley of the Wiesen, we found ourselves very much amongst the mountains. To the left ran the narrow, shallow,

babbling stream. The road now presented the usual Black Forest features. Sloping hills breaking into chains ; dark pine woods ; well made but desolate roads ; few signs of life, except occasional wayside inns or houses. When night was beginning to fall, the mountains closed in and the valley narrowed. The stream rushed on more turbulently, as if angry at having its space contracted ; the scene grew somewhat wild and grand ; two or three houses opened up, with windows already lighted, as if to greet us ; yet a little further, and Schönauf, reposing in a hollow and surrounded by high mountains, was reached.

The inn was primitive, but the landlord was intelligent, and spoke excellent French—a somewhat rare occurrence in the more remote spots of the Black Forest. I gathered from his conversation that he had been born to better things. The rooms were large and sufficiently well furnished, and it was all much better than could have been expected in so remote a spot up amongst the mountains.

For it seemed very much out of the world

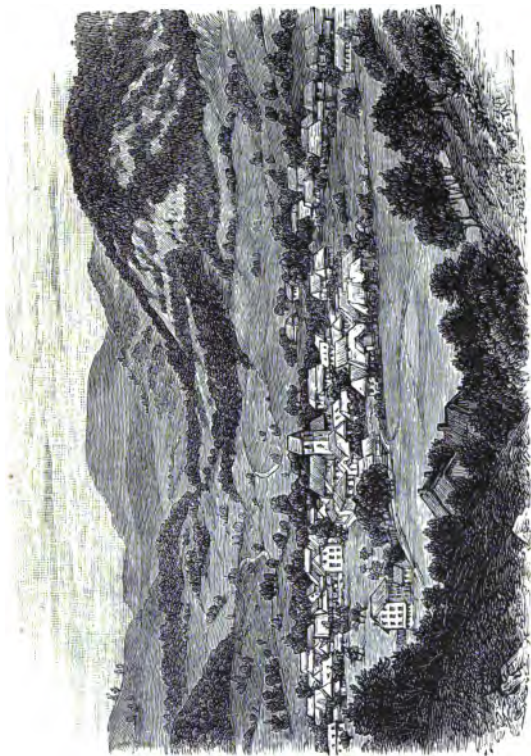
indeed. Yet it was so beautifully situated, with all the surrounding hills sloping about—under the very shadow of the great Belchen itself—that I felt one could be happy here for a whole week, exploring the neighbourhood. It abounds in mountain excursions ; in walks where hour after hour you may lose yourself in the woods in mazes of wild tangle, flowers, and briar ; in paths and roads untrodden by the ordinary tourist, and delightfully secluded, where the sense of freedom and beauty is revelled in to the very utmost. For it is something to wander out of the beaten track. You gain, in a minor degree, that feeling of exploration, of separation from the world and mankind, from the postman and the immediate neighbour, that must form one of the great charms of the prairies of the New World.

In the twilight I wandered up amongst the hills, which looked so desolate they might have led to the ends of the earth. Down a mountain path there came a cluster of young men and women, returning from their day's work, singing choruses that made the hills ring again to the

echo. The gathering gloom warned me that I also should do well to return. It would be no hard matter to miss one's way up here; and a night on the mountain would be neither comfortable nor agreeable.

Schönau itself is a small but not altogether unimportant place. Wandering about it that night, the streets totally unlighted, it looked weird and uncanny. Some of the thoroughfares were composed entirely of cottages, that, in the darkness, seemed black and broken with age. Streets of deserted ruins, perfect wrecks they looked, neither light nor sound to be seen or heard. Evidently the people of Schönau were early folk.

On returning to the inn, the landlord said it was the night on which their musical club assembled. He was afraid the sweet sounds might nevertheless prove a discordant element to slumbers, as they might be kept up rather late. My room was just over the music-room—should he put me a floor higher? But in this primitive place surely all sounds, musical or otherwise, would cease by eleven o'clock, and



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I decided to stay where I was. I could hold out until then.

I had reckoned without my host. The moments passed, but not the music. To do them justice, it was an excellent performance. The president, who alone touched the piano, went through some of Wagner's most difficult compositions with the skill of a master. When not playing a solo, he was accompanying the others in part-songs, well sung, certainly, but putting an end to all repose or sleep. If I could by any possibility have hated music it would have been that night. Most devoutly I wished that St. Cecilia, reversing the order of things, would strike the lyre and raise all these angels to the skies.

Until between two and three in the morning the performance never ceased. Then the piano was shut down with a determined hand, and the "Gesellschaft" drifted out into the night. I saw them file off in ones, like a string of musical turkeys—for I had long since sought my window in despair, and watched for St. Cecilia amongst the stars. The house was left to peace and

quietness. But of what use, now that the dawn in faintest glimmer was creeping up into the eastern sky? The "Gesellschaft" might as well have gone on discoursing sweet sounds until breakfast, for sleep and rest had taken flight.

The next morning the landlord apologized for the lateness of the performance. Never was apology less out of place. But he explained that one of the company (the player who had so charmed me in spite of all) was going away on a long absence—perhaps even for ever. Why, in the name of wonder, could mine host not have given me this information last night? Irritated nerves would have been soothed, excuses made. I would even have sat up and taken part in these "midnight orgies," and joined in their harmonies; in the end have passed round the loving cup and speeded the parting guest. No; things are left unsaid; explanations are not forthcoming; and it is all the fault of stupid people who will not speak at the right moment. The rough in life, that might have been so smooth, remains rough; the crooked is never made straight—all for the want of a few words in the right place. Verily,

we miss our opportunities and live our lives as if they were all to come twice over, not as if each parting sunset brought us nearer that day when the pulse must cease to beat, the heart, with all its emotions, must be stilled for ever.

That morning, when the faint dawn in the east had given place to broad day, I found my way to the breakfast-room and to the apologies of mine host. What could be said in return? Only that the next night I would accept his offer and ascend a stage in the world.

Before eight o'clock a carriage, with as strong and brisk a pair of horses as I had seen in the Black Forest, stood at the door. And here I would counsel the reader to take, on all possible occasions, in this district, a small carriage where a large one is not needed. It is more agreeable ; you travel more quickly ; as a rule the springs are in better condition, and dislocation is less imminent ; and, strongest consideration of all, it saves the horses.

I started for the Wehrathal. This time at least it should be done ; it remained to be proved whether it would be seen also. The morning

was not promising. It did not rain, but the clouds were low and threatening; there was a chilliness in the air which took a great deal of the pleasure and romance out of all surrounding objects.

Yet it was a lovely drive, and with sunshine would have been perfect. The road commenced by being steep and rugged; a sharp ascent between low, green hills, with higher hills beyond. Then we descended and followed the course of the stream, whose banks were overshadowed by small trees; banks lined with such a wealth of moss and wild flowers and delicate ferns, that in gathering specimens the carriage was for ever running on out of sight—for the horses would not stand still. Thus we went on for some time, until we came to a pass on the left leading up to Todtnau, a small place in the mountains, 2000 feet above the sea level, where manufactories of paper and cotton have found a local habitation. Its beauties to-day had to remain unexplored, and we continued our way, reaching presently the village of Todtmoos, with its pilgrim church, all buried in the hills. At the primitive inn we



WEHRATHAL.

halted awhile to rest the horses ; and on leaving it the rain which had all along been threatening began to fall.

A little below this, at Todtmoos Au, began the greater beauty of the Wehrathal. In full sunshine no doubt it would have proved worthy of all its reputation, but the rain was coming down, and the clouds hung about the mountain tops ; white mists that wreathed themselves into fantastic forms, and rolled, snake-like, about the trees, and crept and crawled onwards and upwards, and seemed to gather strength and volume as they went—always a bad sign.

Yet, in spite of all, the beauty of the Wehrathal was evident, and beyond doubt. When, every now and then, the clouds lifted and the rain condescended to cease, one saw how grand and lovely it would be under blue skies. The valley was very narrow ; just room enough for the road and the rushing stream ; an accumulation of wood and rock and loveliest green. The mountains towered on both sides ; here barren, and standing out like the ruins of castles that might have been there since the commencement of the

ages, magnificent and hoary ; there covered with glorious pines and still more luxuriant verdure to the very summits, trees fringing the sky in delicate, lace-like outlines.

The road wound about the mountains, so that we were constantly opening up fresh views, never seeing very much of the valley at one time, an effect that so greatly increases the magical beauty of scenery ; never to know quite what may come next ; a fresh surprise, a new and delightful sensation at every turn. Now we followed one bank of the stream, and now, crossing an old stone bridge, skirted the other. All the time the water ran and frothed and appeared to sing for joy at its beautiful home ; and we seemed to race onwards with it. The willing horses wanted no urging, but with a small carriage and a light weight, fancied themselves out for a holiday, and went careering down the valley at full speed.

But between the Wehrathal and the Albthal (they are often brought into comparison, and each has its supporters), there is this difference : In the Albthal the road runs far up the mountain side. You are elevated and look

down constantly from a height more or less considerable. You gaze from deep, precipitous banks into a river running far below at the bottom of the wild pass or ravine. You seem to be above it all, to command all ; a sense of wings, of soaring, takes possession of you. There is a great deal of rugged wildness and grandeur. You have far-reaching views of extraordinary beauty ; mountain after mountain covered with forest trees ; a wealth of wood and verdure, sufficient, one would think, to supply the world with all its needs for the next age to come. The road, running beside the steep, wild precipice, is diversified by tunnels cut out of the solid rock. In spite of so much elevation, still the pine-clad mountains rise towering above you ; but here they slope outwards, so that the upper portion of the valley is expansive ; only from the road downwards does it contract into a wild ravine.

The Wehrthal, on the other hand, has none of this wild, savage grandeur. There is no looking into great depths, which always gives a far stronger sense of the sublime and the splendid

than looking upwards from the depth itself. Here the road is for ever on a level with the stream. The rush of the water is every now and then almost a disturbing element in one's journey. From this depth we gaze up into the wealth of wood and verdure of the mountains that tower and almost meet on the right hand and on the left. They are beautiful exceedingly ; but it is a softer beauty than that of the Albthal : the green is not confined exclusively to pine trees. I saw it under every disadvantage ; the weather was almost as bad as those three days passed at Wehr in hopeless expectancy. This had to be taken into consideration. But when all due allowance was made, the Albthal seemed infinitely more impressive than the Wehrathal.

Human nature happily embraces every variety of taste and sentiment ; the sublime to one mind will be a matter of indifference to another. Therefore, whilst some might prefer the rugged grandeur of the Albthal, others might find greater enjoyment in the gentler influence of the Wehrathal, whose beauties also often touch

the point of sublimity. But though I thought that the two valleys could not be compared, yet undoubtedly the Wehrathal yields the palm only to the Albthal. Both should be seen, and he who neglects either misses two of the choicest, loveliest spots in the Black Forest.

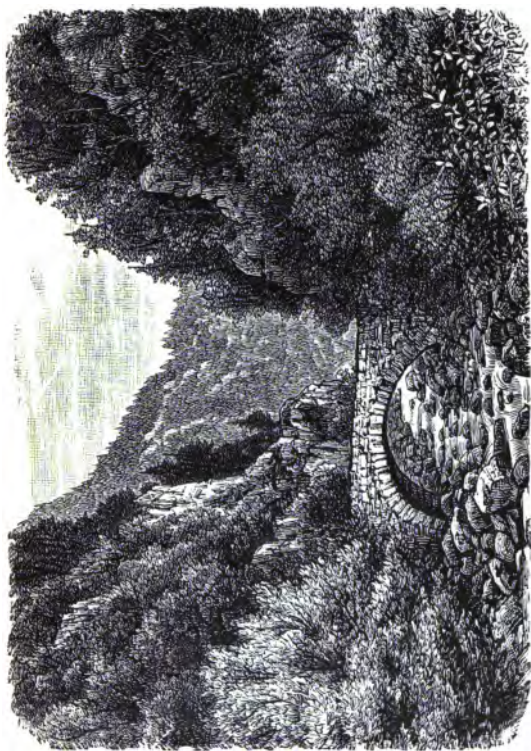
The little horses made good way, and dashed downwards. We passed out of the valley into more open country, and in a few moments entered the small town of Wehr. Here, last week, the little coterie had been weather-bound. Waking the echoes of the quiet street, the people came to their doors and windows, and recognizing a familiar face, seemed disposed to greet it as an old friend. But there was something "stagey" in it all. I had disappeared at one end of the place; I reappeared at the other. Who was to guess the long round by road and rail that had led to this species of trap-door sensation? Perseverance surmounts obstacles; but, alas, it evidently would not control the weather.

Once more at the little Hotel Brügger, out came the landlady with hands uplifted in as-

tonishment at so much perseverance, so little good fortune. But if I would take the trouble to enter, at least if I could not have blue skies I should have a good dinner. It is surprising what a consolation for many ills this appears to be to a large proportion of mankind. To many who serve and to many who are served, a banquet is the Ultima Thule of existence.

So the hostess set about her work, and put herself on her mettle, which all ended in a very creditable result. And even as blessings, any more than misfortunes, do not come singly, in less than ten minutes from the time of entering the house, the clouds drifted and the sun came out with full power. We should have a fine afternoon, after all, said Frau Brügger; the drive up the Wehrathal would be magnificent. Remembering her false prophecies of last week, I doubted, and took her present assurance, like her excellent dishes, with a grain of salt.

After a rest of more than two hours, Jehu came round with his equipage, and away we went again; this time bidding a final farewell to Wehr. Once more the sky had clouded;



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once more, at the very entrance of the valley, down came the rain. There was no other choice, no alternative, than to bear it. On we went, this time constantly ascending, and making slow progress. But at length we passed the foundry of Todtmoos Au, and reached Todtmoos itself, with its pilgrim church and primitive inn. Here we were glad enough to escape for an hour's shelter. The driver, like all sensible mortals in like condition, went in for hot coffee and a deep, deep draught, not of rich Rhine wine, but of kirschwasser. For this latter decoction, or distillation, these Black Forest drivers have a capacity as surprising as it is inexhaustible.

At the end of the hour (oh, kindly clouds, how soon we forget the miseries you cause us, the beauties you withhold!) the rain ceased, and we continued our journey with fresh hopes and aspirations.

And now, to vary the route, we turned off to the left up into the mountains. It was a lovely, desolate way. Here one truly felt in the very heart of the forest. The woods were on each

side, and the road seemed merely a clearance cut through them ; we could see far into their depths. Long, green aisles, thick clumps and clusters ; mazes of delicious ferns and flowers, moss and tangle. Up and up we ascended, until at length we found ourselves in the very clouds, then above them, whilst they covered the prospect before us like a sea.

It was a strange sight, an exquisite delusion. But one longed to see the weather clear, so that the whole of this evidently magnificent panorama might stretch out in all its beauty. Even as I longed and wished, like a great scroll the mist rolled rapidly away, and in a distance of some two hundred yards the whole obstructing vapour had been left behind.

The effect was magical. We were now on a level with the tops of the mountains ; the climb had been steep and somewhat long. Before us lay an immense panorama of green, smiling valley and verdant, fertile plain, and far-off wooded hills. Villages reposed here and there ; streams ran their course. It is one of the most striking and most varied views in the Black

Forest. Now we began to descend into the valley; a long pass, steep as the ascent had been. Cows and goats browsed on the hillsides, looking like flies clinging to a wall, mere animated dots in the landscape. Down and down we went; first overhanging the valley, then gradually reaching the level, and leaving the tops of the hills far, far above us. The road was now long and circuitous, shut in by the mountains. We passed wayside villages, small and primitive, where wood-choppers kept time to the sound of the rushing stream. Halted at a wayside inn; ostensibly to refresh the horses, really to invigorate the driver, who so praised the kirschwasser to the skies, that I was tempted to take the glass humbly handed by the landlord. It might have been distilled poison.

However, on coachman and horses the short rest and refreshment had the desired effect. They went forward with renewed energy; and, soon after, we launched out upon the Wiesenthal, the road travelled yesterday from Schopfheim.

But the Angenbachthal, now left behind, was certainly one of the most delightful, one of the

most primitive and refreshing in the Black Forest. Whether travelling by carriage, or whether on a walking tour, it will equally enchant those who are fortunate enough not to pass it by. To the pedestrian especially it presents attractions, for he may wander into the by-paths at his own sweet will, may lose himself in the mazes of the forest, and luxuriate in all this not only solitary, but comparatively untrodden ground. He will revel in lovely specimens of ferns and flowers, even though it may be but to tread them underfoot. And he may hold converse, now and again, with a primitive, simple-minded woodcutter, for whom the world is but a name, the destiny of nations an unknown problem, and the law of progress not even a mystery. And he may dream and dream away the moments, and fancy himself in the Forest Primeval.

CHAPTER VIII.

RETROSPECT—AND A SUMMARY—SCHÖNAU—BADENWEILER—
GOOD-BYE TO THE BLACK FOREST—DOWN THE RHINE—
HOMEWARDS.

WE left ourselves in the very middle of the lovely Angenbachthal, where the wanderer may loiter amidst untrodden paths, and revel in the glades and depths of a vast forest.

From this varied and beautiful valley we issued forth on to the interesting but less striking Wiesenthal. All the different features of the road, noted the previous day in coming from Schopfheim stood out again with a sort of friendly home feeling about them. For it is seldom that you travel a road twice over in the Black Forest, unless you have taken up your abode in that district ; or are making more than a passing stay in any particular place, for the

pleasure of seeking and finding its hidden beauties.

And, after all, this is the only way of knowing the Black Forest—of knowing, indeed, any place or country. Many of the best spots, especially in the district before us, lie concealed in little nooks, by-paths and by-ways, that the ordinary tourist never thinks or dreams of. Take Norway as an example. No one can really be said to know the choicest parts of that fine country who has not explored all the small branches and ramifications of its fjords. There, where few penetrate, or have the chance of penetrating, visions of rare loveliness exist. Nooks and dells, and stretches of green banks lined with the wild flowers of the wood, sufficient to keep you in a state of ecstasy and happiness for weeks and months at a time. And one of the charms of these spots is their absolute seclusion, almost untrodden by the foot of man, where the birds will scarce start at your presence, for they have not yet learned the natural enmity that exists between themselves and mankind.

So the beaten tracks, the high roads of the Black Forest, where people meet each other, and most do congregate, are not, as a rule, the gems of the neighbourhood. You travel to a given waterfall or a noted mountain ; on your road you pass down the wide and beautiful valley that lies in your way ; in the distance you see a path leading up into a narrow, wooded defile ; and you wonder whither it would take you, and what disclose, never dreaming that beauties unheard of, unrecorded, lie within reach of you.

But if you are "doing" a country in the accepted way, these by-paths must be neglected ; you can only explore them, get to know them intimately and to love them, by taking up your abode with them for a longer or a shorter time. And who does this ? Not one in ten thousand cares to do it, or is able to do it. Most people wish to see the broad outlines of a country in a given period, generally a limited period ; devoting days where they should give weeks, and weeks for the work of months. The minute details that make the beauty and finish of a picture must be left to the imagination.

By far the larger number of people like, as a rule, what they call a "fresh scene" every year, and, therefore, seldom visit twice the same place. The pleasures of living over again your first impressions are unknown. Nay, it may be said that many of them have no impressions, first or second. More, far more than half of those who travel, do so for the mere excitement of rushing about. Of the real beauties of nature, with all elevating and inspiring thoughts, that exquisite soul-pleasure which tongue cannot well utter or pen express, they are unconscious. It is not born within them; they are not in sympathy with it. They see the violet, but the subtle fragrance, so fleeting that a first inhalation seems to rob it of its perfume, they miss altogether. "We can only understand Shakespeare by the Shakespeare that is within us."

Yet it is something, it is even a great privilege, to know merely the broad outline of a country; and it seems to me that any one going through the Black Forest with only a limited time at his command, could not do better than sketch out his plan as follows:—

Baden-Baden may be made the starting-point. Some days should be given to this neighbourhood, which abounds in excursions. There are lovely forest walks within easy distance ; short mountain excursions ; ruined castles, and castles not in ruins (such as the Favorita), crammed with antique furniture, and decorated walls, and painted ceilings, and wonderful old-stained glass, and treasures of old china, enough to drive any one distracted with envy and longing and admiration.

Having thoroughly done Baden-Baden, the traveller's next point should be Triberg, going round by the Murgthal, and taking care that no clever coachman misses it for the sake of a short cut and to economize time. Gradually he will get round to Achern, visit the Mummelsee, and get on to Allerheiligen, a wild, mountainous, lovely, and romantically wooded district. Thence he will pass on to Griesbach and Rippoldsau, through Hornberg on to Triberg.

At Triberg he will regulate his stay by time and inclination ; not omitting, above all things, to do the railway journey between Triberg and

Hornberg, to and fro, going beyond Triberg, if he pleases, as far as St. Georgen or Villingen. This can be done in less than a day, and it is one of the loveliest bits of railway travelling in existence, within anything like a reasonable distance.

From Triberg he will go down the Simonswald valley; and if he is wise he will secure an outside seat on the diligence, where, perched on the top, and dashing along at the speed of four good horses, he will be far better placed than would be possible in a carriage or private conveyance of any sort. But he will remember that the Simonswald and the best part of the scenery comes only after passing Furtwangen. At Furtwangen, he might, "if so disposed," look up the house of *Lämy Sohne*, and the amiable youth with the broad, jolly face, who will show him over his factory, and set all his birds and organs going for the mere sake of giving pleasure. That youth was a credit to human nature.

After leaving Furtwangen, if he finds himself under the care of the fat, oldish, red-faced and good-tempered little courier, he will congratulate himself.

At the end of the Simonswald he will reach Waldkirch, after that paradisaical drive where the fruit trees grow on either hand ; rich plums, ripe pears, and rosy apples, green-coated walnuts and prickly chestnuts, all crying out to be gathered ; tempting the sons as well as the daughters of Eve, in this nineteenth century, even without the serpent's aid.

At Waldkirch he will sleep, if he is wise, for the lovely little place is worth a good many hours' devotion. And, instead of seeking an inn, he will patronize the Pension of St. Margherita, a sort of family hotel, where he may wander up and down the staircases and the large corridors, and people them with many generations of silent nuns ; shadowless forms moving with noiseless tread ; pale, grave faces ; for as even ghostly smiles were banished in the days of their penance and pilgrimage, they would not be likely to cultivate in the spirit the frivolities denied them in the flesh.

And, loitering in the large, upper, handsome room, cunningly painted, where royalty has deigned to rest and refresh itself, he may awake

startling echoes from a piano at the further end, and muse over bygone scenes that weird melodies will conjure up as his fingers wander at will over the keys, inspired by the little halo of romance and antiquity surrounding him within and without the old convent. Then he may go to bed, and find his dreams haunted by those shadowy nuns ; one or two of them standing out with pale, ethereal beauty that rouses a wild fever in his heart ; until, tossing restlessly from side to side and chasing the phantoms that, like a will-o'-the-wisp, ever elude his grasp, he wakes to the cold reality of a dark and silent chamber.

He thinks he has slept for hours, but the church clock opposite, with its double tongue, twice strikes midnight. A ghostly hour in truth, and he is compelled to rise and light a taper, and throw open the outside shutters to the stars of heaven, to banish the ghostly effect of his vision.

Leaving Waldkirch, he will proceed to Freiburg. Thence by the Höllenthal, the Titisee and the Schluchsee, on to St. Blasien. There

are numerous excursions through all this district, which may or may not be made, as already stated, according to time and inclination. Höchenschwand, at least must be visited. It is a spot worth knowing. Some day the knowledge might become useful. A day, for instance, when health required the restoring properties of high, pure mountain air, without the crowd and trouble and uncertainty of the Engadine valley, or any of those places that, having a local habitation, have gained a fashionable name. Höchenschwand is quiet; perhaps it might even be called essentially dull; it is perfectly free from every kind of excitement, and only they who can dispense with the modern modes and manners for killing time must attempt to seek its pure breezes and fine views.

From St. Blasien the traveller will proceed down the Albthal to Albbrück, there take train for Brennet, and journey up the Wehrathal to Schönauf. He will devote some days to Schönauf, visit Todtnau, and above all shoot off from Todtnau up the Angenbachthal—that lovely, untrodden spot. Then, finding his way into the

Wiesenthal, he may turn leftward and visit Zell and Hausen (Hebel's old home), though he will perhaps think this loss of time and trouble unless he has a peculiar fancy for seeing the haunts of poets. Or he may turn to the right, and find his way back to Schönau, where at the Hotel Sonne he will meet with a comfortable room and an intelligent landlord. But—in fair warning and justice it must be recorded—let him in the staircases hold, like Cardinal Wolsey, an aromatic sponge to his nose, or a handkerchief dipped in eau-de-cologne ; and under these given conditions the passages will be bearable.

You must have something to put up with wherever you go, and, in travelling, the truest philosophy is to make the best of everything ; to preserve, even under provocation, a "calm, unruffled mien," and so "censure others by the dignity of excelling." The small contretemps, and the little things that will go wrong in one's travels, are the shadows that serve to bring out into more powerful contrast the brilliant sunshine of all that is lovely and of good report, in ourselves, our surroundings, and our experiences.

The traveller will finally leave Schönauf for Badenweiler, where, if it please him, he may take train for Baden-Baden, or Cologne, or any other point from which he may wish to return to "Perfide Albion."

If this plan be followed out, as fair an acquaintance will be made with the Black Forest, as intimate a knowledge of its beauties, as is possible without a prolonged sojourn. It may be done in two or three weeks, but better still in six or eight.

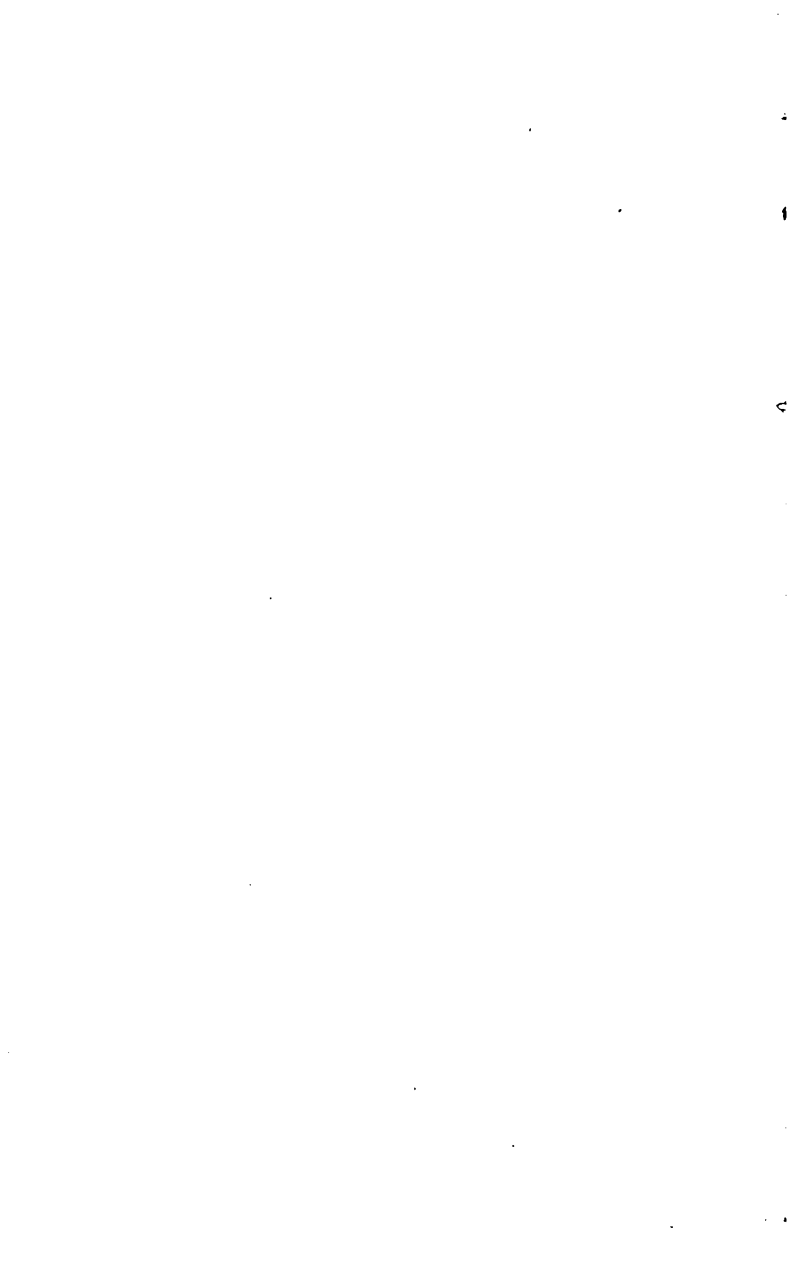
Revenons à nos moutons, or rather to our pastures and prairies. We last issued out of the Angenbachthal into the Wiesenthal. The little horses dashed onwards towards Schönauf with as much energy as if they had only just left the stables, and not thirteen hours ago. Neither whip nor urging needed they. In the gathering gloom—for twilight was now fast falling—we passed down the road by the side of the running stream, and between the dark mountains. Then the lights of the houses—the advanced guard of Schönauf as it were—gleamed upon us, and soon

after we halted at the hospitable doors of the Sonne.

Out came the landlord, with hopes that it had been a pleasant day, and fears that the rain had been too constant a companion. The horses went round to their well-earned rest, as briskly as if they wanted to do it all over again. Fortunately, it takes two to make a bargain. The landlord had moved me a stage higher in the world, but it was a case of closing the door when the steed was stolen—there would be no meeting and no music that night, said mine host. So it came to pass. The night was not made hideous (or harmonious) by this concord of sweet sounds. All was still and calm; the whole place was steeped in silence profound as the grave. The chemist opposite and his little wife, who had come to the window time after time in costumes that nothing but midsummer rendered prudent, nothing but darkness irreproachable, to-night might have taken for their motto, *Requiescat in pace*. Gazing out upon this little world from this upper window, long after its simple inhabitants had sought and found slumber, was like looking



SCHÖNAU, WITH INN IN THE BACKGROUND.



out upon a life-in-death kind of scene. The mountains around seemed ponderous, gloomy and portentous: a weird night influence was abroad that almost weighed upon the spirit.

But it was a charming place, this Schönauf. Next morning, when compelled to bid it farewell, I felt that it was all too soon. Very much of the neighbourhood had to be left unexplored. I longed to accept the landlord's offer, who proposed to pilot me himself to the summit of the Belchen, if only I would stay yet a few days. The summit of the Belchen, where so fine, so grand a panorama is unfolded; so many chains of mountains, the Alps, the Jura, the Vorarlberg, the Vosges. But the weather was unfavourable to excursions, and time pressed. I had made far-away promises and engagements; was, as it were, on parole. To fail, would be almost to fail in honour. And, beloved reader, have you not found that where duty calls one way and pleasure another—answer the latter if you will, but the apple you have plucked inevitably turns to ashes in the mouth.

So, the next morning at eight o'clock, the

willing horses were once more at the door, brisk and fresh as if yesterday had been to them nothing but a day's holiday. The driver was as proud of them as if all the credit were his own—and perhaps no little of it was due to him. Evidently he took good care of them, and every night made them a bed of straw at least a yard high.

We started for Badenweiler, the landlord begging me to return next year for the purpose of doing one or two valleys that now had to be neglected ; valleys, said he, as beautiful as the Wehrathal or the Angenbachthal. Above all, to ascend the Belchen with its wonderful and magnificent panorama. If I did not care to walk up, he would provide an excellent horse. I held out some slight hopes, but committed myself to no rash promises. And we parted.

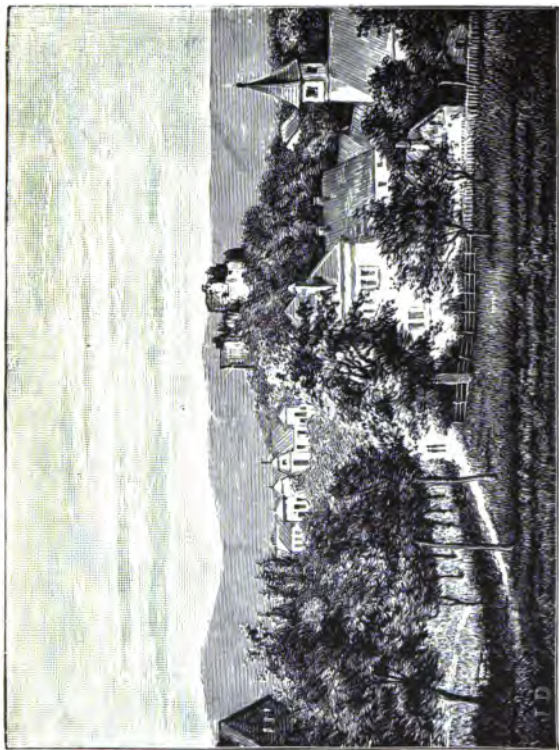
I was now taking my last drive in the Black Forest, and a grey shadow rested upon it. All last things are sad. The last day of a holiday ; the last look at a house we have inhabited ; the last good-bye to a friend who has been much to us ; the last days of our youth ;—but oh ! saddest of all, the last look at a face we have loved,

before it is closed from us for ever. There are some things that but for the life beyond the present we should never have courage to bear or long-suffering to endure. In how many hearts is found the echo of that simple epitaph in Worcester cloisters, giving such a history of mental pain and utter sorrow, in the one word *Miserrimus*?

In spite of the shadow, this last drive was a pleasant one. We wound up into the mountains, the great Belchen always visible; then descended rapidly over a stony road to a primitive village, where the horses were treated to a loaf of bread each, and the coachman—but that needs no record. Then another long, steep ascent over a rugged road, looking down upon fields and pastures where men and woman were at work, the latter wearing short, gay petticoats—shorter and gayer than seemed necessary. Did not this indicate that feminine human nature, wherever found, even in these primitive out-of-the-world spots, has one bond of union and sympathy in common—that of vanity? And oh, ye fair ones, vexation of spirit is never far off!

Finally, we passed into a valley with lovely woods on either side, and a shallow, half-dried-up stream, with great rocks and boulders strewn about in a sort of wild and rugged chaos. The skies had cleared and the sun was hot and glowing. What would I not have given for this yesterday when going up the Wehrthal? What beauties abounded there now, that then had no existence? However, the woods here to-day were lovely in the sunshine, and waved and whispered to each other in a harmony one might well envy. They were real woods, too, not mere wooded slopes. You could penetrate far into them on the level, the beautiful, inevitable carpet of ferns and flowers all the time beneath your feet.

But I delayed little by wandering. Passing a few villages, and keeping on our way, about eleven o'clock we were in sight of Badenweiler. We left the woods and the shallow stream and the rocky chaos, and launched forth into a more open space. The mountains were still about us, but less near at hand. On the high road, children sat on ponies led by grooms. Pretentious houses reared their magnificent heads.



BADENWEILER.



Altogether a suspicious atmosphere of fashion and frivolity began to surround one that was quite in keeping with the reputation of Badenweiler.

It may, indeed, be called the most fashionable watering-place in the Black Forest ; more after the order of the much frequented watering-places in Germany than any other spot in this district. At Griesbach and Rippoldsau there was less pretension, a simplicity and freedom only sufficiently appreciated on reaching Badenweiler. Comparisons may be invidious, but at times they force themselves upon you whether you will or not.

Nearing the town, the beauty of its situation was apparent ; in this, at any rate, it is perhaps unrivalled. The watering-places in the Kniebis Baths district are all more or less shut in by mountains ; a too close proximity, that after a while inevitably becomes oppressive. Badenweiler has all the beauty of the wooded mountains in view, but at a distance which lends them enchantment.

Villas, I have said, were dotted about ; ivory

and other stalls lined the road, just as they do in other gay watering-places. Passing onwards, the little horses whirled up to the door of the Römerbad. My first sensation was one of positive annoyance at seeing a building so large, and, apparently, so fashionably appointed. Farewell to all the pleasant freedom, simplicity, and sans gêne of the Black Forest. I felt inclined to fly back to Schönau and lose myself at the top of the Belchen; but it seldom answers to turn back.

I am bound to say that the interior of the Römerbad did not altogether correspond with the exterior. It was rather a case of the outside of the cup and the platter. At a trifling expense and the exercise of a little taste it might have been made pretty and charming enough. The large hall, or vestibule, possessed all that was necessary for a pleasant room, instead of the bare, barren, chilly lounge it now was. Here one smoked, talked, and drank beer or wine, wondering the while whether the proprietor was stupid or indifferent, or, like the sleeping beauty in the wood, was steeped in a century of slumber.

The meals were served in primitive style, and might decidedly have been better than they were. On the whole, in this most fashionable of Black Forest watering-places, there was far less comfort than in many an inn comparatively unknown. It seemed as though the hotel had grown and expanded of its own accord, whilst the interior arrangements had remained stationary for the last twenty years.

But there were compensations. The bedrooms were most of them excellent ; the passages were large and airy ; the honey was unrivalled ; the situation of the hotel everything that could be desired. Above all, the proprietors were so civil and obliging, so really attentive and anxious to please, that one forgave them all other shortcomings ; and if I again visited Badenweiler, I should again go to the Römerbad.

Badenweiler is more accessible than many places in the Black Forest, and to this fact owes some of its popularity. But it has done much on its own account in the way of enterprise. It has quite a magnificent pump-room, ball-room, concert-room ; it has a band ; it has good baths ;

it has "antiquities" in the form of the old Roman baths discovered intact some years ago and religiously guarded. It has a pedigree. It has gardens and a charming avenue of chestnuts, beneath whose shadowy branches one may saunter up and down safe from the mid-day sun.

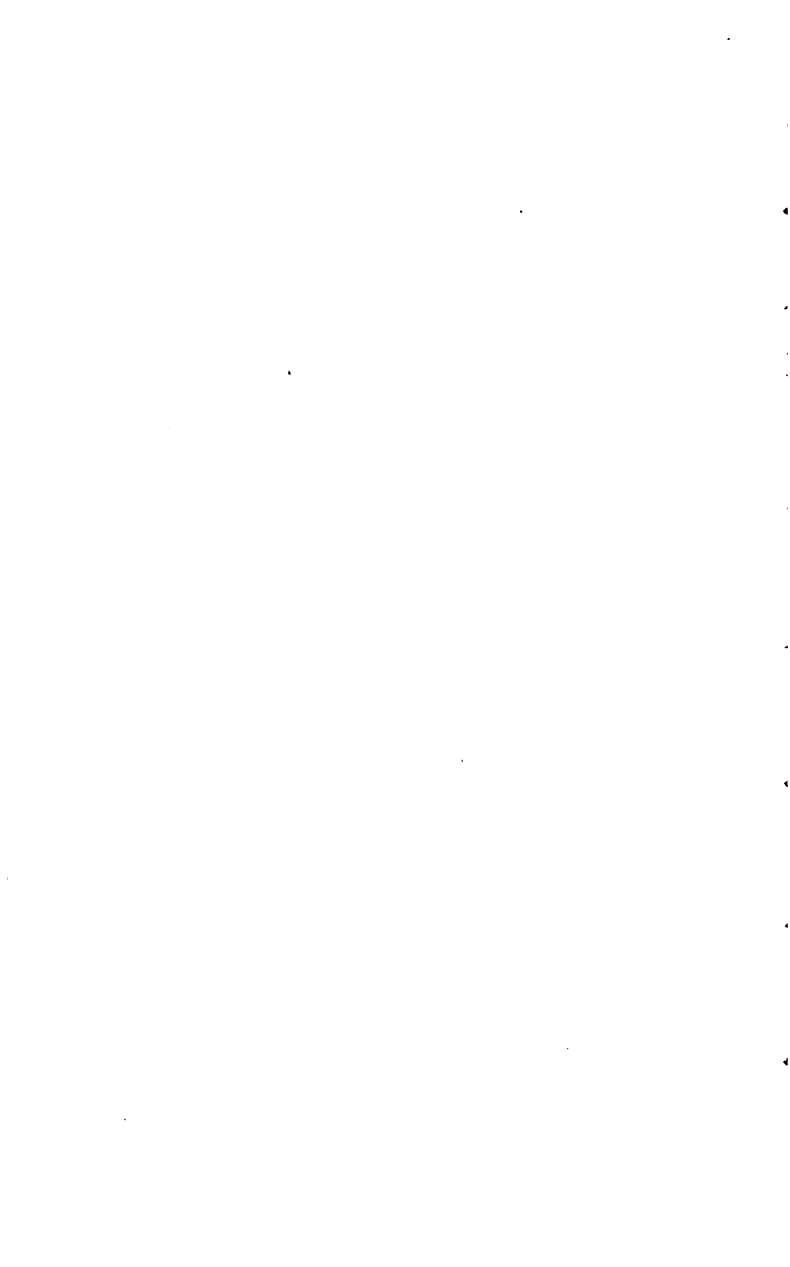
So sauntering, a nut was suddenly thrown at our feet, and looking upward, a small squirrel with bushy tail and bright eyes was gazing down from a tall tree, for all the world as if he took in the humour of the joke he was playing upon us; for the nut, on examination, proved a bad one. The cunning little squirrel had known that well enough.

We were three on whom the little squirrel had played his practical joke. My companions I had met at Schaffhausen, and now again at Badenweiler. How it sometimes happens that, in travelling, we make pleasant chance acquaintances. Our lives are thrown together for days; we become comparatively intimate; there is a sympathy, a power of "synchronizing" that might ripen into a closer bond, with time and opportunity. But, suddenly, the lines diverge



MAINZ CATHEDRAL.

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again ; the spell is broken ; a certain blank has to be filled up. Might we not enlarge upon the Undeveloped Friendships of life ? Who knows all the sweets and pleasures we miss in this way ? Will the threads be gathered together and taken up and woven into warp and woof in the next world ?

The waters of Badenweiler are used both externally and internally. A favourite remedy is the whey cure, and people rise up in the morning with the spirit of earnest infatuation for their glass of whey or milk, and repeat the dose so many times during the day.

The forest walks are numerous. You may wander about the hill and lose yourself in paths that lead apparently to nowhere ; paths that seem to exist only to lure you on—whether to fortune or to fate, those know who have found the end. We wandered, two of us, up one of these tempting, mysterious tracks until we reached a maze where wood and tangle and bracken crackled and rustled beneath our feet, only to turn back at last in despair of ever finding a goal or the summit of the hill. But every

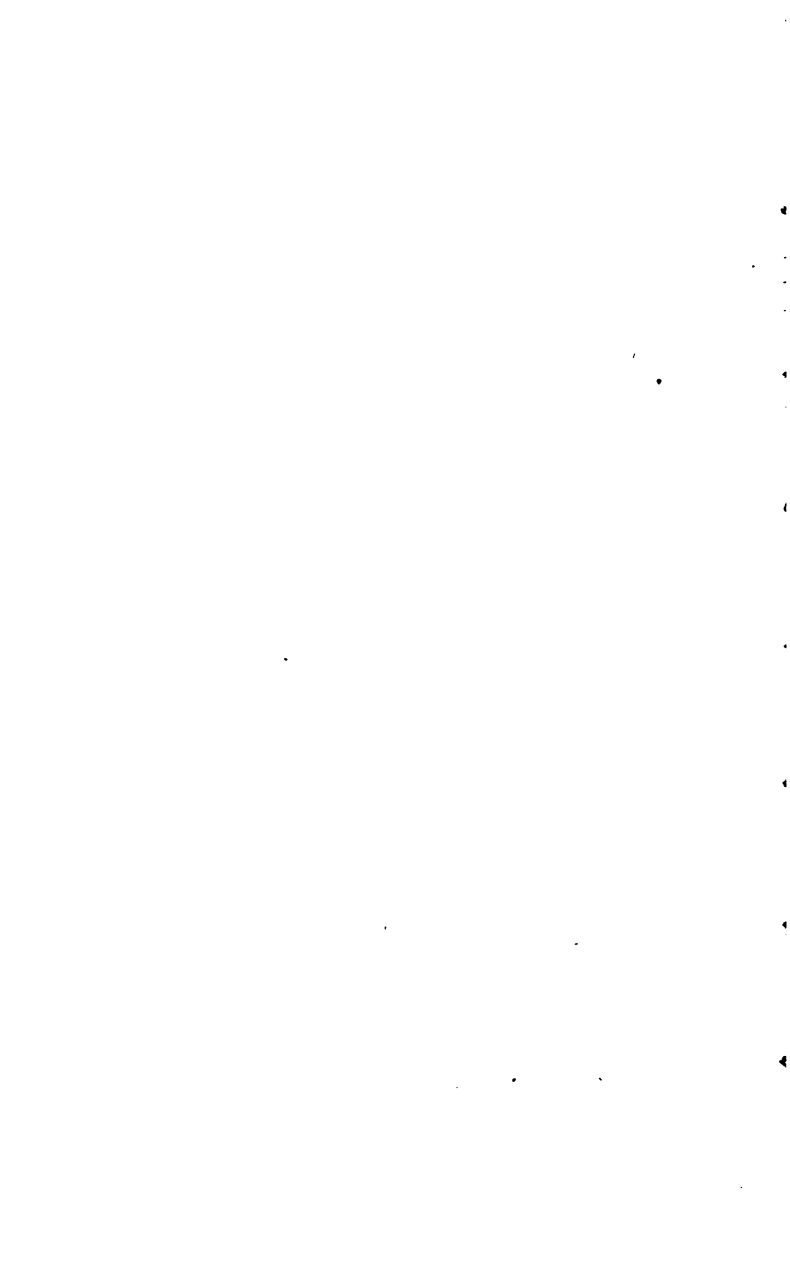
now and then we came to a spot where a view lovely and far-reaching met the eye. Badenweiler at our feet ; the ruined castle built by the Romans for the protection of their baths, rising picturesquely and romantically by the side of the hotel ; stretching far beyond, a vast, wide-spreading plain, watered by the ever-lovely Rhine, the distance bounded by those graceful Vosges mountains, with their soft, wavy, long-drawn undulations.

Undoubtedly there is much that is pleasant and attractive about Badenweiler. Visitors make themselves very happy here during their sojourn. The season, to-day, was almost over, people were leaving ; most, indeed, had left already. That very morning an American group had departed with a great show of ceremony, rustle, luggage, carriages, *éclat*, and *douceurs*. The *châtelaine* (may the word be permitted without loss of caste?) of the party had gone about the *salle à manger* and other rooms, dropping substantial showers of gold pieces into the hands of every asphyxiated waiter she could summon from the most invisible shades, from the highest to the



OLD HOUSE ON THE RHINE.

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lowest. The whole was done with that wonderful air of grande dame dispensing favours that was highly entertaining. Then there was much arranging of places and settling of seats, and the carriages moved off in a procession of two or three, amidst the bows, obsequiences, drop-down-deadness of manner of the assembled establishment.

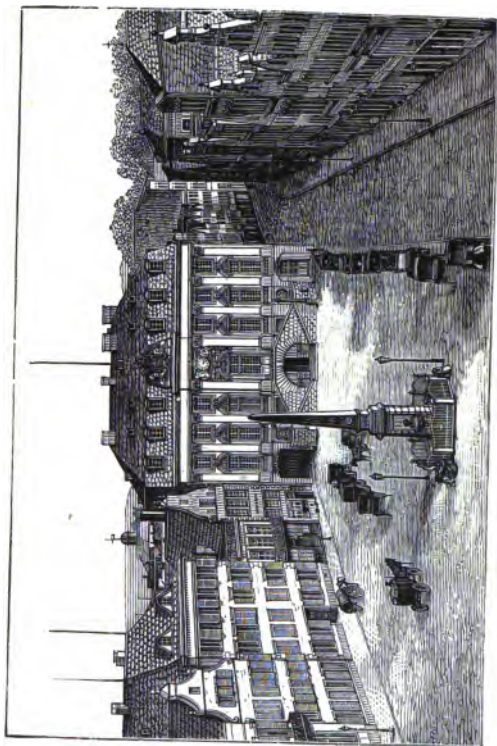
It is getting a serious matter in these days to travel in anything like comfort and decency. Unless things take a turn (that mysterious contingency that never happens: these kind of things never do take a turn) few except millionaires, Americans, merchant princes, Lord Mayors, Aldermen, and the like, will venture forth to claim acquaintance with the seven wonders of the world. This luxury of the age; this incessant cry of the grasping horse-leech, "Give! give!" Oh, the pity of it!

Badenweiler was one of my last impressions of the Black Forest. I do not think it a bad place to finish up with. More fashionable than the rest of this pleasant district, it paves the way to the world we are re-entering. And,

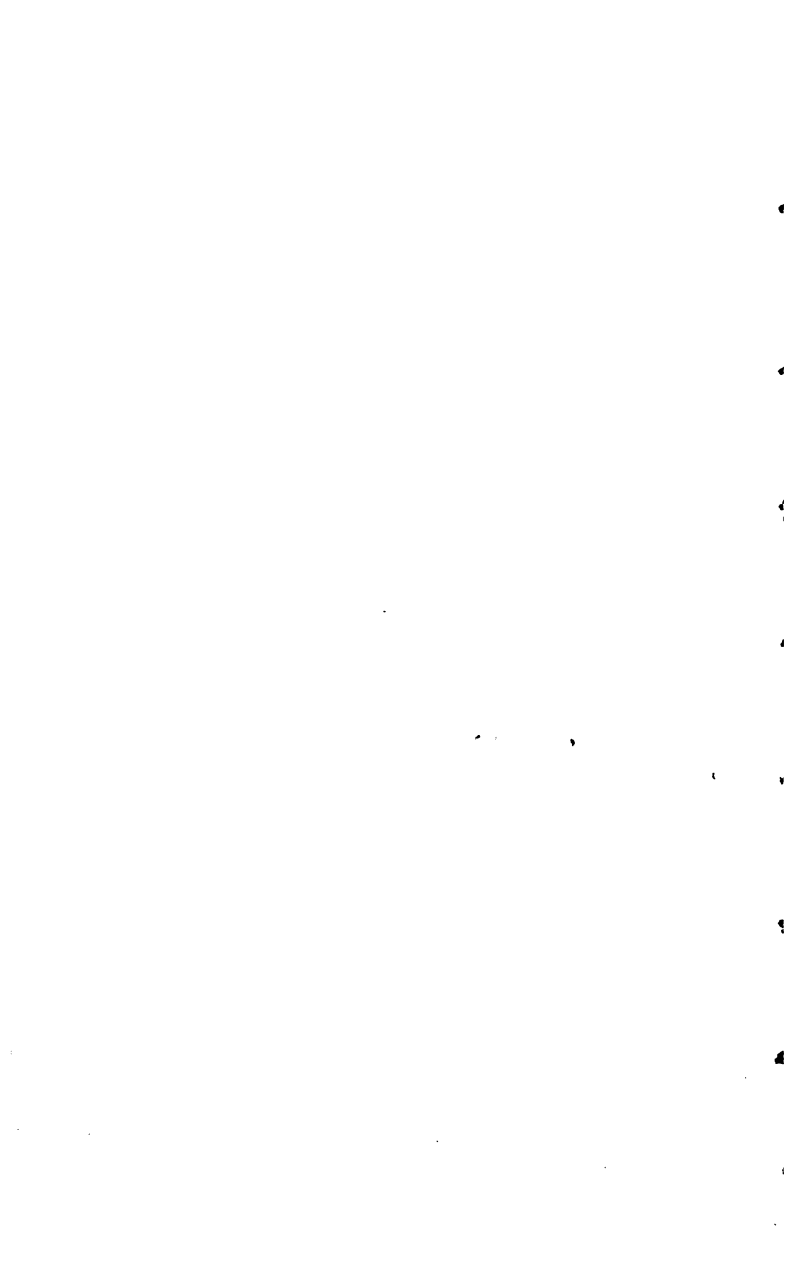
certainly, in point of beauty, few spots are more favoured.

It is also an easy matter to get from thence to any given part in the outer world. You may take train for France, Belgium, or any of the ports from which one embarks for England. An hour's journey by omnibus or carriage, through a picturesque country, roads lined here and there with magnificent avenues of trees, and you find yourself at the small town and station of Mulheim.

I booked for Mayence, and there rested the night ; wandered about the old-fashioned streets, enjoyed the old cathedral, the gay scene of the women selling their butter and eggs under its very shadow in the *Marché*. From Mayence I took boat down the Rhine for Bonn, passing all the spots so familiar to every one. But, as fate would have it, sudden squalls were the order of the hour ; icy cold winds, and showers of hail and sleet and drenching rain that robbed everything of its beauty, made every one look blue, every one's teeth chatter. And the assemblage ; the mutilated *Queen's English* ; the exceptions



BONN.



in the silent aspirate that never existed before, and seemed to herald in new rules and regulations! Will the School Board at least do us this good—that in the next generation all classes shall speak their own language with some degree of propriety and correctness? No, never. There is an ingrained want of fineness and temperament and perception in the Englishman that he will never lose, never get the better of. All Celtic nations have a certain quickness of disposition, a certain refinement that redeems them from vulgarity down to the lowest rank. The Englishman alone, of the prevalent class, has it not, and will never have it.

I was glad to reach Bonn, that charming spot, with its pleasant environs, where one can dream under the statue of Beethoven, and before the house he lived in. There had been a fête the previous day, and the streets were still decorated with flags and garlands of flowers; one saw it in a gala dress none but continental towns know how to assume. The next morning I went on by train to Cologne; and soon the tall spires of the majestic cathedral loomed up in the

surrounding plains and above the fortifications of the old town.

So I had returned to the spot from which, so to say, I had started. But having had enough of the crossing *viâ* Queenborough and Flushing, I chose the rail from Cologne to Brussels ; passed through that bright, pleasant capital at five in the morning, when all the town was yet hushed in sleep ; and was soon on the way to Calais.

Alas ! the journey was now dull and prosy enough. The Black Forest, with its lovely valleys, and pine-clad hills, and pleasant resting-places, was a dream of the past, but clothed with all the realities of a waking dream. And our waking dreams, like those visions of the night that haunt our slumbers, must have their end. The seasons succeed each other in due course—day and night, sunrise and sunset, have their appointed times ; the sea its boundaries. You and I, dear reader, have our appointed time also. We know it not ; but in a certain Record it is marked, and when the hour strikes, a call, unheard by other ears, will summon us, let us hope,

to beauties of which this earth is but a faint reflection. Here we must ever have thorns with our roses ; pleasure and pain attend us hand-in-hand.

Meanwhile, let us be thankful for all the beauties of this earth, great as the human mind can well grasp, showered upon us in Divine Wisdom and Love with an abundance which makes life itself almost a daily miracle. Let us not only see them, but endeavour to realize the marvels, clear and hidden, that they contain. Depend upon it, we shall rise from the contemplation better, higher men and women than we were before.

Finally, the Black Forest is not by any means one of the grandest, most sublime spots of earth ; yet I have heard some travellers say that it has given them emotions and sensations they never experienced elsewhere. Most certainly it is well worth visiting. And to the disciple of the *Æsthetic* school it especially commends itself ; for he may be refreshed at the sparkling streams that abound ; he may contemplate the pearly dew-drops that tremble and glisten on the ex-

quisite ferns and flowers that bestrew his path ; and he may feast on the perfume of the most luscious wild raspberries and strawberries this world can yield.



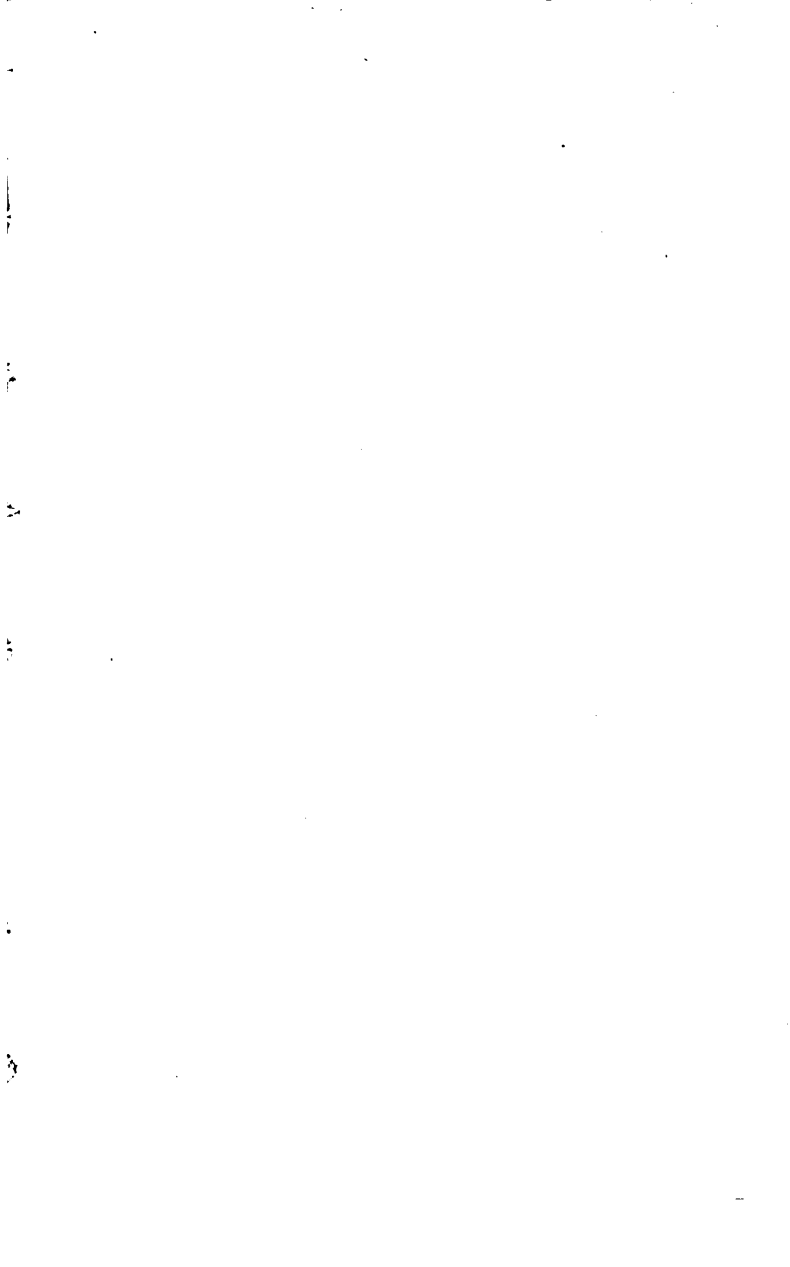
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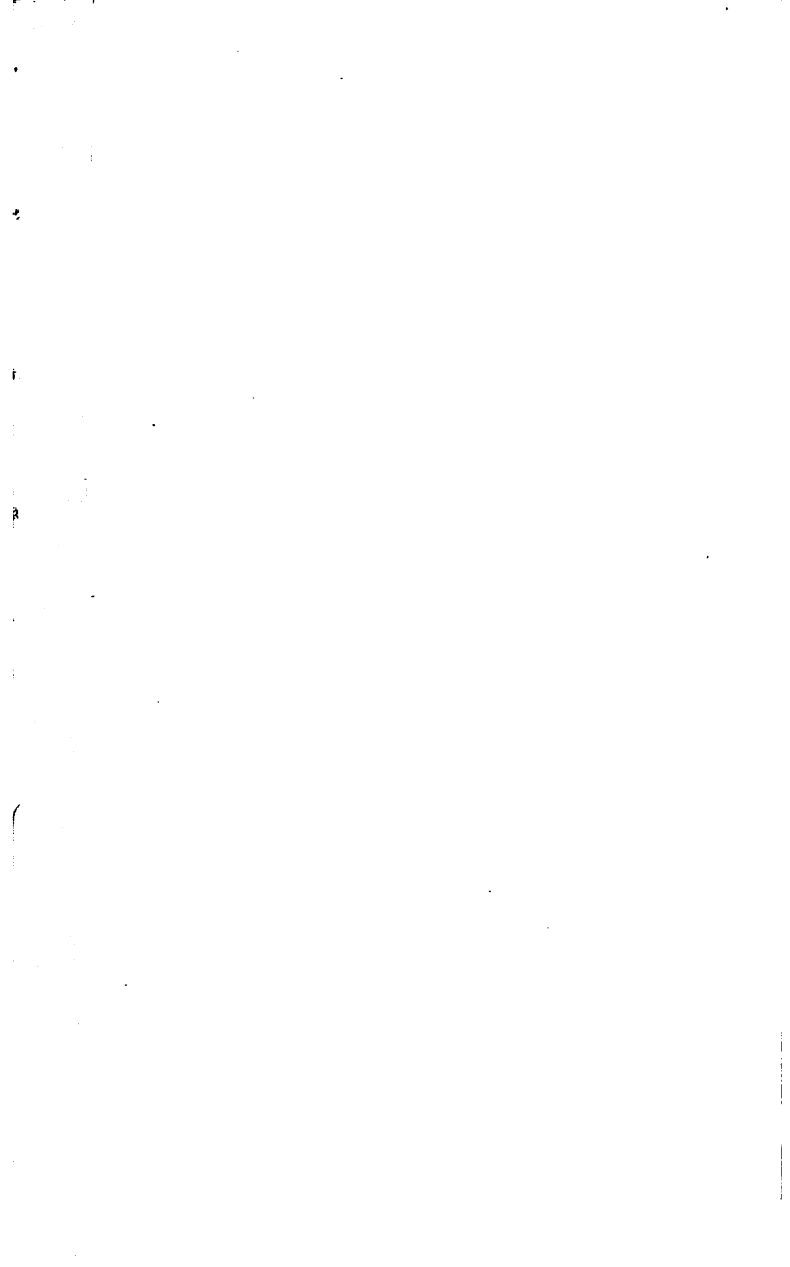
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